





LETTERS FROM HELLES





# LETTERS FROM HELLES

*By*

COLONEL SIR HENRY DARLINGTON  
K.C.B., C.M.G., T.D., D.L.

WITH A PREFACE BY  
GENERAL SIR IAN HAMILTON  
G.C.B., G.C.M.G., D.S.O.

*WITH SKETCH MAPS*

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## PREFACE

By GENERAL SIR IAN HAMILTON

G.C.B., G.C.M.G., D.S.O.

*Commanding Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, 1915*

Thus spake unto me not very long ago my own private Oracle : " Write Finis to the story of thine own Life without pausing to write Prefaces to the Lives of others, lest haply thou stumblest unawares over a tombstone ! "

Since then I have clasped my own life as closely as if it were a football and have been striving to get across with it, eluding the tackle of Publishers, Freelance journalists, Autograph hunters and other Time-poachers who are lined out between me and the goal posts.

How comes it then that this New Year finds me at my old game of passing the ball and making pause in my own undertaking ? Well, quite simply, it is the unnerving and distracting sense of impending calamity which makes me, like everyone else, unable to settle down quietly to my own ordinary business. The effect of these heavy clouds darkening at once the horizons of so many parts of the world is to make me feel we may not be able to keep out of it. And if we are not going to be able to keep out of it, how



## PREFACE

necessary (amongst many other necessities) that students should lose not a moment in learning how to write home to their mothers, as well as bridegrooms from the battlefield to their brides.

There could not be a better model for this purpose than the *Letters from Helles* by Sir Henry Darlington. I have been privileged to read a good many letters circulated to friends during the Great War and some of them were very bad, talking about the Angel of Death in the most familiar, eerie and uncomfortable way. These—when they got back to the home front—were as much out of place there as was the man who wrote them out of place at the War front! All will, however, I think, agree that this naïve and original story by Colonel Darlington of the adventures of himself and his Officers and Rank and File at the Dardanelles must have heartened up the friends who read them at the time and I think, too, that even now when we know that they only gave one half of the story they will do us all good to peruse. For although I am a very old campaigner and have been in many wars where the British soldier has always played his part as to the manner born—I must say that the happy way in which these Manchester men encountered their ghastly mix-up of mud, flies, stinks, bombs, corpses, was an eye-opener. Had those men all been killed (and they very near were) still they would have refused to be defeated, and they would not in fact have been defeated. Of such were, not necessarily the Kingdom of Heaven, but anyway, certainly Colonel Darlington's own Battalion, the 5th Manchesters, miners from Wigan. The 6th

## PREFACE

Manchesters were another brand of the same breed, just as a Corona cigar may be out of a box marked Claro or Colorado. These boys were Claro. I happened to be standing by as they disembarked on the Peninsula and I scanned every one of them—mostly young school teachers, many of them fit to be officers right there. A beautiful battalion! Had they and the rest of this Division been with us on the date of the first landing, i.e., five days earlier, what a wonderful story would have been given to old Mother Europa to paste into her book of reminiscences. But I must not spoil my preface by making it a vehicle for publishing my own thoughts; I want to devote it entirely to helping Sir Henry Darlington to portray those men he commanded so bravely and so well, as they answered back the death's head grin of the trenches with a cheery smile, whilst for three weeks the Dardanelles Committee were eating good dinners and sleeping the sleep of the just.

Here are a few samples taken from the book:

"... when a cookhouse (an open-air one) was blown sky high and the surrounding landscape littered with rice, all the Master-Cook said was, 'It favvers a b—— wedding.'"

"Our men on the left had some shooting, but nothing much. They slew one Turk, I imagine a scout, who put his head up out of the scrub and had a good look round. Our men were very amused the way he poked his head up and peered round. He was christened 'Audacious Alfred,' and one man said, 'He was looking for his iron ration,' which caused much laughter."



## PREFACE

Now for a few samples of the tone in which officers on service should write home to their relatives.

"The sniper has just hit the top of my dugout a fearful smack. Ernest Fletcher, who is reading, said, 'Bow-wow.'"

"You must not picture us in deadly danger and doing the death and glory act *à la* Graphic. We live absolutely underground, do our turn in the fire trenches, which is absolutely the safest place in the Peninsula and spend the rest of our days digging and doing road making and other fatigue work day and night."

"I am still very fit and untouched. You will be glad to hear that in case of an attack the Authorities do not allow the C.O.s to lead their men, they say that is the job of platoon commanders and that C.O.'s should be in the rear of their commands, where they can watch and influence events and keep in touch with their commands and with Brigade. So don't imagine me charging at the head of the Battalion. One has to sit on a telephone in comparative safety. It will not be your idea of my functions, but it seems sound if you think of it. They say that things go wrong when a C.O. gets knocked out."

"It is very much worse to think of at home than it is really. It becomes one's normal life and you don't care twopence for the minor discomforts there are. If you could just change places with me for a week and see things from inside my brain, you would go home after your week was up and never worry any more. At home one thinks of it as 'so dreadful.'"

## PREFACE

So now good-bye and a happy new year to the survivors of the Dardanelles in Manchester. You are already being regarded as "old soldiers" by the youngsters. "Old soldiers," they say, "never die; they only fade away." But you will hardly fade away until the sun slowly fades out of the sky and the earth sinks into the universal blackness. For already you form a part of that Great Tradition of the Dardanelles which began with Hector and Achilles. In another few thousands of years the two stories will have blended into one, and whether when "the iron roaring went up to the vault of heaven through the unharvested sky," as Homer tells us, it was the spear of Achilles or whether it was a 100 lb. shell from Asiatic Annie won't make much odds to the Almighty.

IAN HAMILTON.

January, 1936.

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## INTRODUCTION

Before the outbreak of war in August, 1914, the 5th Battalion The Manchester Regiment was recruited in Wigan with outlying companies at Atherton, Leigh and Patricroft. The battalion formed part of the East Lancashire Territorial Division, subsequently the 42nd Division.

The Division in Egypt was made up of the following units :

*Cavalry*.—"A" Squadron, Duke of Lancaster's Own Yeomanry.

*Artillery*.—The 1st (Blackburn) and the 3rd (Bolton) East Lancashire Brigades.

*R.E.*—1st and 2nd Field Companies and Signal Company.

*Infantry*.—(125th) Infantry Brigade : 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th Battalions The Lancashire Fusiliers.

(126th) Infantry Brigade : 4th and 5th Battalions The East Lancashire Regiment and the 9th and 10th Battalions The Manchester Regiment.

(127th) Infantry Brigade : 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th Battalions The Manchester Regiment.

A.S.C., R.A.M.C., Army Service Corps, and three Field Ambulances.



## INTRODUCTION

The Division was mobilized on August 4th, 1914, and on the 10th Lord Kitchener asked the Territorial Force to volunteer for service overseas. This invitation was quickly accepted and on September 5th Lord Kitchener ordered the Division to Egypt.

On the 9th about 40 trains conveyed close on 16,000 officers and men with horses, guns and equipment to Southampton and on September 10th the Division sailed for Egypt, the first Territorial Division to volunteer for foreign service and the first to leave these shores.

The men of the 5th Manchesters were mostly colliers and allied trades. They were blessed with an unquenchable sense of humour, an ability to stick it, great self-reliance and an apparently natural *esprit de corps*: the last two virtues being due, I imagine, to the fact that they worked down pit and were very loyal to their trades unions. I never knew them rattled and their outlook on affairs is well instanced by the following incident: Not being in France on Nov. 11th, 1918, I afterwards asked my Pioneer Sergeant, who was in the front line at the Armistice, whether there was great excitement amongst the men at 11 a.m. on that day. His reply was, "I have seen more excitement at a beer issue."

Of the officers I could never say enough.

MELLINO,  
17th Nov., 1935.

## I.—PREPARATION

*Anchor Line,  
Twin Screw Steamer,  
"Caledonia."*

### BAY OF BISCAY.

We left Southampton via Spithead, as the Needles entrance is mined, at 5 p.m., on September 10th, 1914, with orders to rendezvous off Eddystone at 10 a.m. on the 11th. We loafed around all the 11th and finally left for Gib at 7 p.m. on the 11th.

The convoy is fifteen troopships in three lines ahead and the escort is the battleship *Minerva* and the cruiser *Ocean*. It will take us six days to Gib as we are tied down to about nine knots or less owing to a slow ship.

A strange ship attended at the rendezvous, and after cruising about among us for some hours the cruiser sent a boat aboard and found she was a Dutchman and she was arrested and the cruiser took her into Falmouth.

We had a calm down Channel and in the Bay thick mist and a heavy roll.

We run at night with all lights out that are not actually wanted and no deck lights.

We are getting some Marconi news through, although it is tapped news and not intended for us.

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

Most of the officers have been more or less sick, I think all of them.

The battleships get very angry if we get out of station. It is very curious being part of a convoy and seeing so many ships together.

We arrive Gib to-morrow, Thursday 17th, and the 8th Middlesex go ashore there.

I was inoculated the night before last (enteric). It is not pleasant, but I expect to be quite right by to-morrow.

It is very hot and we have beautiful sunny days.

We had to stop our Marconi yesterday as the battleship signalled "Enemy reported in vicinity, and no more wireless or lamp signalling."

However, our escort looks well after us, and the cruiser does scouting work at intervals.

I suppose we shall have the ship to ourselves after Gib.

I am writing this in my shirt sleeves and shall go into drill to-morrow, the sun is getting a bite.

Our men are all being inoculated I am glad to say.

The food is excellent and the boat very comfortable in every way. I have a cabin to myself. Everybody is enjoying it very much now except those suffering from inoculation. I feel as fit as a fiddle.

We don't know yet where we go in Egypt.

## MEDITERRANEAN.

We stayed at Gib all Thursday and were ordered to ship naval stores for Malta, so we have to call there.

## PREPARATION

I did not go ashore as the men were not allowed to, but most of the officers did by my permission. There was a rumour at Gib that we had been sunk by a mine off Spain. I hope you did not get it in England.

The weather has been extremely hot and the horses have been dying like flies, so yesterday our horse boat, a fast one, was sent on to get to Egypt as quick as she could and take her risks.

The battleship *Ocean* left us at Gib so our only escort is the cruiser *Minerva*.

We have plenty of room now the Middlesex are gone and I am O.C. Troops and have to go round the ship followed by the Captain every morning.

We have formed our double Companies and Archie Brook<sup>1</sup> comes under Milward Rogers.<sup>2</sup> Milward says he will make a very good officer, he thinks.

Captain Bankes, our old Quartermaster of the 1st Manchesters in South Africa, came on board at Gib to see me. He was very surprised to find me in command.

Everybody is very well, one or two of them feel the heat.

It is a very damp heat and this ship was built for the N. Atlantic, the result is very hot cabins, saloons, etc., and we have to have all blinds down over lights at night, which makes it worse.

We got orders to leave the convoy yesterday about 4 p.m. and go to Malta at full speed (17 knots), so we are now by ourselves.

<sup>1</sup> Lieut. A. C. Brook, my brother-in-law. Killed June, 1915.

<sup>2</sup> Capt. H. M. Rogers. Killed May, 1915.



## LETTERS FROM HELLES

Sanders<sup>1</sup> and I sat up last night trying to decipher code wireless which kept coming in from the cruiser *Minerva*. We at last came to the conclusion they had changed the code word and had not let us know, so went to bed. This turned out to be correct, as we managed by an awful fluke to guess the code word and so were able this evening to decipher the messages.

*September 23rd. After Malta en route for Alexandria.*

This has been an extraordinary voyage and I think our men are beginning to realize that we have an Empire.<sup>2</sup>

We spent all Monday in Malta and whilst in there six French Dreadnoughts came in to coal right up into the inner harbour where we were.

Our men swapped lies and cigarettes and whilst one of the Dreadnoughts was being towed past us to have some guns put in her, one of the French sailors shouted, "Are we downhearted?" There was a roar of "No" from our whole Battalion.

When we left to go out and find our convoy we had a tremendous send off which impressed our men very much. The Band of the Dreadnought *Danton*, which you may remember at the Coronation Review, played our National Anthem for us and the whole of the crews lined the sides and cheered. All our own ships did the same, including the crew of a Russian boat,

<sup>1</sup> Capt. J. M. Sanders, Leinster Regiment, my adjutant.

<sup>2</sup> Whilst in Malta Harbour, one of the men was overheard saying to a friend, "Well, mate, I suppose this is this here b—— Empire we have heard about."

## PREPARATION

not to mention a great part of the populace of Malta.

One of our wits invited a French sailor to dine with him in Paris, but the French sailor said, "No, no, we vill dine in Berlin togezzer."

The next thing we met was a huge convoy escorted by a big cruiser, which we imagine to be the Indian troops.<sup>1</sup> Our cruiser and theirs stopped to have a chat and to make arrangements to change convoys.

Whilst this was going on we had the curious sight of 40 troopships and two cruisers all lying together in a heap.

I don't suppose that has ever been seen before or will be again.

It made us think what a haul it would be for the *Goeben* and *Breslau*.

The "Command of the Sea" seems to be more than a phrase now.

We have been very well treated on this boat and everybody has gone out of their way to be kind to us. I have written a letter to the Captain and Officers of the ship thanking them and we drank their healths to-night.

We are all very fit and have only four men in hospital out of 1,013 and these are not serious cases.

We have organised our double Companies and things are going quite well.

A man was buried this morning from one of the other ships, but I heard no details. We have lost a great number of horses I hear.

<sup>1</sup> The Lahore Division, bound for Marseilles.

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

### ALEXANDRIA.

We are at Mustapha Pasha Barracks, Alexandria, with the 6th and 8th Battns.<sup>1</sup>

It is the coolest station in the Mediterranean and very healthy.

I do not mind the heat and feel very well. I have a nice cool room in Barracks and we have an excellent Mess.

The sun is very hot and the glare tremendous. I have one Company in a fort<sup>2</sup> in the Town. We also supply the Town Guard, which has to be smart, and we deal with all passports.

There is ripping sea-bathing, and I had a lovely swim before breakfast.

We have a guard boat out for bathing and don't allow anyone to get far out.

You can dive off the rocks into five feet of water.

The fatigues we have to find are enormous. We arrived here Friday evening and yesterday had every man in the Battn. on eight hours fatigue at the Docks six miles away. It is very hard on both officers and men.

Sanders' mare died on the voyage out, but both my horses<sup>3</sup> have come. I have engaged a native syce.

### CAIRO.

21/1/1915.

We have now arrived at Cairo! Our last train got in at 8 p.m. last night and we got orders on arrival

<sup>1</sup> The Manchester Regiment.

<sup>2</sup> Fort Kom-el-Dik.

<sup>3</sup> My horse "Bob" survived the War.

## PREPARATION

for a big divisional field day to-day. Incidentally I was informed I could not have a haversack ration for the men, so I had to go down late last night and have a slight argument with one<sup>1</sup> of the divisional staff. Eventually I got my ration and we parted the best of friends.

We settled down in camp pretty late and had our breakfasts in the dark at 5.30 a.m. We paraded at 6.30 a.m. and got in at 4.30 p.m. after doing an attack, digging ourselves in and finishing up with another attack. This as well as a good march out and back. Not a man fell out, so I think we have come through a pretty severe test.

We are all under canvas in bell tents. I am living in one and am very comfortable, although it is nothing but sand on the edge of the desert and it is very cold at nights. I am writing in our small ante-tent now in my thick khaki, a thick sweater, my thick waistcoat and a greatcoat. You would probably think it as warm as a summer evening at home.

24/1/1915.

I have been very busy all morning getting things right in Camp, routine, etc. Things are inclined to slack off after a move. It is just as well I did as I hear Gen. Douglas<sup>2</sup> is coming round in about an hour. Yesterday we had a pow-wow on the field day. We escaped pretty lightly and Gen. Douglas said one of the four features of the day was the spirited attack of the Manchester Brigade.

<sup>1</sup> Col. R. J. Slaughter, C.M.G., D.S.O. One of the best.

<sup>2</sup> Major-General Sir William Douglas, K.C.M.G., C.B., D.S.O., commanding the 42nd Division.



## LETTERS FROM HELLES

Yesterday I went with Gen. Lee and H. L. Knight,<sup>1</sup> Brigade Major, to write my name in the calling books of the Sultan, McMahon and Maxwell.<sup>2</sup> Cairo is a beastly filthy town, and I shan't go down there more than I can help.

### ABBASSIA.

11/2/1915.

I am sitting outside my tent (4 p.m.) writing and watching a very dusty football match. I am very fit indeed; they say you don't get Egyptian tummy at Cairo like you do at Alexandria. It is very hot here in the summer, but not at all unbearable, I don't suppose any hotter than South Africa.

To-morrow we are having a very interesting day, the five seniors from each Battalion leave here at 6.45 a.m. for the Canal, Kantara and Ismailia to see the fortifications and where the scrapping has been.<sup>3</sup>

Gen. Douglas has arranged it as a tour of instruction for us and I am very much looking forward to it. I went to a Concert on Tuesday and Gen. Douglas made a speech, in which he told us all about our division in the scrap. Our Engineers have been practically responsible for the whole of the defences of the Canal, and our guns did good work. Seven hundred dead Turks were found opposite one of our Batteries.

<sup>1</sup> Brig-General Noel Lee was, I believe, the first Territorial Brig-General. Major H. L. Knight, Royal Irish Fusiliers.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Henry McMahon, High Commissioner in Egypt. Lt.-General Sir John Maxwell, Commanding in Egypt.

<sup>3</sup> The first Turk attack on the Suez Canal on February 3rd, 1915.

## PREPARATION

The Battery Commander<sup>1</sup> found he could not observe properly from the trenches, so went 800 yards forward under a heavy fire and carried on from there until the Turks chased him back. Whilst he was being chased back, the senior Captain<sup>2</sup> climbed a tree, and directed from there until he was shelled out of it, so he moved to a flank and carried on from another tree. They all seem to have done very well, although I should imagine it is fairly soft fighting, judging from our casualties.

I personally don't think we shall see France for a long time, if ever; they must have a garrison here and I don't think the Turks have finished with the Canal by any means.

We have found one of our ex-officers, Walter Brown<sup>3</sup> by name, serving as a private with the Queenslanders. He has only just found out we are here.

The football match is awful and I shall have to move; I can now and then see a figure emerging from an enormous and stifling cloud of dust.<sup>4</sup>

13/2/15. Saturday, 9.30 a.m.

I am writing in the sun outside my tent waiting for orderly room. Saturday is our slack day, kit inspection and close order drill.

We had a most interesting day yesterday on the Canal; a party of 20 from our Brigade went. We caught the 7 a.m. train from Cairo, had breakfast on

<sup>1</sup> Major B. P. Dobson, Bolton Artillery.

<sup>2</sup> Capt. P. K. Clapham

<sup>3</sup> Captain W. S. Brown, afterwards killed.

<sup>4</sup> Neither heat nor dust nor any other adversity ever stopped football.

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

board and got off at Kantara ; incidentally we passed over the battlefields of Kassassin and Tel el Kebir,<sup>1</sup> where Arabi's trenches are still to be seen. We were taken round the Kantara defences and shewn where the fighting took place and had it all explained.

The defences on the Canal are wonderful. We then went by train to Ismailia and had tea on board. At Ismailia we had another account of the scrapping there and saw the pontoons in which the Turks tried to cross the Canal ; they were made in Germany of aluminium, and were painted "G.4. CONSTANTINOPEL" like that ; observe the spelling, it betrays their origin I think ! They were very full of shot holes and there are still a lot of Turks at the bottom of the Canal. A diver went down once, but refused to go again. I fancy their ammunition keeps them down.

We then went down by ferry-boat to Toussoum, where the Turks actually got down to the Canal bank and launched their boats, and where the toughest fighting took place. All the Turkish scratch trenches are along the bank and in every one was a pair of boots ; there were hundreds lying about. I fancy they took their boots off when they got orders to embark in the pontoons and rafts they brought. We found lots of ammunition (empties) and some full clips. Sanders found some full clips in a boot, so started looking for more. He caught hold of one boot and tried to pick it up, but found it was on a dead Turk. The Indians have only partially buried

<sup>1</sup> The scenes of Arabi Pasha's defeats by the British under Sir Garnet Wolseley in 1882.

## PREPARATION

them in some cases and their limbs stick out of the sand. There were piles and piles of kerosene tins ; they brought their water in them on camels, then when they arrived they were used to make rafts of. Very clever idea.

We went to see the grave of "Major von Hagen," who is supposed to have played the white flag trick on the Punjabis.<sup>2</sup> He was found with a white flag just where the incident happened. The marvel of it all is how they ever crossed Sinai with pontoons, guns, baggage and water. It is an amazing feat. Their casualties were about 2,000, ours were 4 officers, 17 men killed, and about 70 wounded. It must have been very gentlemanly fighting from our point of view. If they come again, after this reconnaissance, and I feel sure they will, it will not be quite so genteel. We came back on a dining train and arrived here about midnight. In fact it is the only way to see war, and I feel I could have sold my ticket to any American for about £1,000 !

<sup>2</sup> This was merely rumour and almost certainly untrue.



## GALLIPOLI

35'15.

Just a line from the Transport *Derfflinger*,<sup>1</sup> captured from the Germans. We are on board and probably go soon but don't quite know yet.

I am glad you got Mrs. Lindsay's<sup>2</sup> cable. The men are very bucked and in excellent spirits. I feel quite sure they will do well.

*British Med. Force. 5/5/15.*

I am writing before we land in the hopes it will get to you some time if I leave it on the ship.

We get there to-morrow early and don't know what we shall do or what is going on. I am very well and the two days at sea in lovely cool weather has bucked us all up tremendously after the heat at Cairo.

The bags that were issued to carry our emergency rations in were white, so we boiled them all in tea to-day and the result is quite good—they are distinctly khaki.

Gerald Allen,<sup>3</sup> I fancy, has jaundice, and will probably have to go back to Egypt to get over it.

I am sharing a Cabin with Knight.

The islands we are going through remind me exactly of the West Coast of Scotland.

Several people we know came to see us at Alexandria including Mr. Valentine<sup>4</sup> and Mr. K. Birley,<sup>5</sup> who is running a teashop on the quay for the men.

<sup>1</sup> This ship was afterwards renamed the "*Hunslet*."

<sup>2</sup> The Hon. Mrs. Ronald C. Lindsay, Cairo.

<sup>3</sup> Afterwards Lt.-Col. G.E. Allen, commanding the 5th Manchester Regiment.

<sup>4</sup> The Vicar of Ramleh, Alexandria.

<sup>5</sup> Of Alexandria.

## II.—GALLIPOLI

ABBASSIA.

30/4/15.

We are under orders to fit out at once. We are told Sir I. H.<sup>1</sup> cabled home asking to have us.

Everybody is fearfully pleased and although I don't thirst for blood, I shall be very glad for the Battalion to get a show. They have worked very hard and been very keen, soldierly and well disciplined, and I think they are quite capable of giving a first-class account of themselves.

I send you a cable from C.L.B., H.Q.,<sup>2</sup> on the occasion of our meeting when 500 were present.

*Sunday.*

We are off to-night. The Battalion is fearfully bucked as you can imagine. I am very fit and certain the men and officers will do very well. I am quite glad to go and give them their chance. As you know the thought of scrapping does not spoil my sleep or appetite.

<sup>1</sup> General Sir Ian Hamilton.

<sup>2</sup> A meeting of ex-Church Lads Brigade Members was held and cables were exchanged with H.Q. in London.

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

I hear we are going to a splendid climate, like Alexandria only cooler, and it is certainly ripping here. We shall get our orders to-morrow morning, and I suppose shall land to-morrow.

I went to early service on board. The Dean of Sydney took it. We have a Chaplain attached to us as well, a very young one, but I like him. Everybody is keen on a show.

### DARDANELLES.

*In the Trenches,*

10 5 15.

Just as I started this letter the Turks started to shell our aeroplane, which was very high right over us. We could hear the pieces of shell falling and actually see them in the sunlight. They fell quite close. I am very well and not taking any risks.

We are at present in the second line trenches, a good way behind the firing line.

As is usual in support we get a lot of "overs," and are also shelled some time during the day. We are quite safe, however, in our trench and I fancy the Turk is short of ammunition.

We have had one officer (Jim Walker's brother)<sup>1</sup> very slightly wounded, he has not left duty, and about 12 men are wounded, all slightly.

More shells at our aeroplane and more pieces. I wish the beastly thing would go away.

We had a good voyage on a filthy ship and I sent a cable back by Allen who had jaundice.

<sup>1</sup> Lieut. T. C. Walker, killed June, 1915.

## GALLIPOLI

We landed in tugs and I went in the first one with A Coy.

We had three shells in the water fairly near us from a gun<sup>1</sup> called "Asiatic Annie," so you know where she is.

We have bivouacked since and have no kits, no blankets, no camp kettles and no nothing, but we are very well fed.

There was a devil of an attack by us the day before yesterday; we were in reserve and I was ordered up to support part of the attack in the afternoon. We went up<sup>2</sup> and got into some support trenches just at dusk and were shelled and fired at mildly coming up. Our casualties were only three though.

We are still in these trenches, but don't know for how long.

We watched, earlier in the fight, the most extraordinary bombardment by our guns and saw the French charge the trenches and chase the Turks out. They caught it from our guns as they left.

The usual evening bombardment and rifle firing is starting.

Last night I got a message about 1 a.m. to stand by for an expected counter attack, which never came off.

Both sides, I fancy, were nervy and expecting an attack, the result was firing of all sorts all night. I slept pretty well between times.

The snipers here are very clever.

<sup>1</sup> A big gun on the mainland, which used to shell us from the rear.

<sup>2</sup> As we went through a rather exposed na lah one of the inhabitants put his head out of a hole in the ground and said, "They call this hell fire valley, sir." It cheered the men more than anything



## LETTERS FROM HELLES

It is getting dusk now and I must stop, also letters have to go down to the base at once.

It is very cold at nights, but a lovely climate, absolutely perfect. Only one shower of a few drops since we came and the flowers and birds are lovely. I feel very fit and quite like old times. It is very funny how all the different people take shells. I find I am the only one, from my South African experience, who can tell where they are coming, and the range is just right, you have time to tumble into your trench.

*Trenches. 14/5/15.*

I am *very* fit. Sleep as I used to in S.A.<sup>1</sup> and eat enormous quantities of food.

The weather is perfect again. We had one day's rain and our trenches were a quagmire. We are still in the firing line reserve trenches and have to be careful showing up. Their snipers are very good, and they now and then shell the trenches. They hit my dugout three times with shrapnel the night before last and my last dugout twice.

Young Walker was hit slightly in the head. Cyril Ainscough<sup>2</sup> got a spent bullet in his foot and Cunningham<sup>3</sup> was hit slightly in the face. They are all nothing and only Cunningham went to hospital. He was up here to see us to-day.

We have still no kits and I want a bath badly. I have a ground sheet and one blanket and no change,

<sup>1</sup> The South African War.

<sup>2</sup> Lieut. C. Ainscough, killed August, 1915.

<sup>3</sup> Capt. Cunningham, R.A.M.C.

## GALLIPOLI

but it is much nicer having no luggage to bother about. The men take it very well, but of course have not faced much yet.

We had rather a bad time coming up, but it was more frightening than dangerous.

We have had one man killed and 20 wounded. The Turk aeroplane guns are beastly. The pieces fall and you can hear them coming for ages, also sometimes you can see them falling in the sunlight, **very slowly like a penny through water.**

The Turks have a big gun up. They killed Frank James<sup>1</sup> horse with it yesterday. I am perfectly filthy with mud and want of a bath and change, but I am shaving. Archie Brook looks like a Turk himself with his beard.

I have stripped my badges, wear putties and a web **kit and carry a short rifle.**<sup>2</sup>

Here comes Archie.<sup>3</sup> He wants leave to go out and bury 20 dead Turks just in front of his Trench. He is now with the Machine Guns. The aero is right over me now, I hope they won't shell it. It is a very **good life this and makes you feel so fit.**

5.15 p.m. I have been up and down the trenches all day driving people to deepen and improve. One gets sniped all the way. The country is a mass of furze and the snipers lie out in it for weeks with tinned food and snipe all day.

They are apparently behind the lines and in between and are almost impossible to spot, the scrub is so thick.

<sup>1</sup> Lieut. F. James, killed Sept., 1915.

<sup>2</sup> A very necessary precaution in Gallipoli.

<sup>3</sup> Lieut. A. C. Brook.

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

I tried for an hour to-day to spot one that annoys us all day, but I can't.

The food is good of a sort, and plenty of it, and we live on tinned stew, which we heat up, and we sometimes can buy bread and eggs. We have plenty of jam and bacon and tobacco, and make out with bully beef and biscuits.

I had a mail to-day up to Apl. 20th.

We had a quiet night last night for once, as a rule there is a devil of a racket some time or other during the night, rifle fire and big guns and the ships and as everything comes over our heads the noise is appalling.

It is a lovely bit of country, agricultural and moorland dotted with trees, and in configuration something like Slaidburn<sup>1</sup> only very few trees. The daisies and poppies are lovely, the landscape is rather spoilt by dead Turks on close inspection.

A. C. B.<sup>2</sup> has 15 to bury to-night as soon as it is dusk. You can't do it by day, only sometimes it is more dangerous at night, as the Turks have a habit of opening a devil of a fire when they think we are relieving trenches or bringing up supplies. Our guns are now starting the usual evening bombardment, and we have our high tea at 6 p.m., and then turn in. Our tea to-night is fried bacon, bread and jam, figs and tea, also a drop of ration rum.

I am hungry too. My dugout is rather damp, but it does not seem to affect me and it is safe enough from

<sup>1</sup> A village on the borders of Lancashire and Yorkshire, where my father-in-law had a grouse moor.

<sup>2</sup> A. C. Brook.

## GALLIPOLI

shrapnel. I sometimes wake rather rheumatically, but that may be the hard ground. I shall be glad when we are relieved from the trenches to get my valise again. I have nothing here.

You ought to hear the big guns fire, it is an education. I won't mention any names.<sup>1</sup> The guns are fairly at it now, they make the whole place rock.

I will finish to-morrow.

15/5 15.

I am very well. A quiet day except for sniping and interminable shelling.

18/5/15. 6.15 a.m.

I am writing this between standing to arms and breakfast. We stand to every day at 3 a.m.

I am very fit and safe and sound.

We are now in the fire trenches about 450 yards from the Turks' fire trenches.

We moved up here the night before last after dusk and got up without a casualty, which was lucky as the Turk generally shells the donga we come up after dusk to catch the reliefs and ration parties.

All our food and water has to be carried up during the night and brother Turk often opens heavy fire to catch parties doing so.

I have an artillery officer here and can use guns when I want to.<sup>2</sup>

The Turks opened a very heavy fire as the troops we relieved were going out, so we fired five shells at the offending trenches and stopped it.

<sup>1</sup> H.M.S. *Queen Elizabeth*.

<sup>2</sup> I found out my mistake very soon, owing to the shortage of ammunition.

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

I was afraid the outgoing troops would suffer. We did not reply with rifle fire.

It is safer here than it is in support or reserve. The bullets cannot come into your trenches at the short range like they do further back, also the Turks' guns very seldom shell us like they do the support and reserve trenches. I fancy they are too close to do much harm to the fire trenches.

By day we have observers and snipers who watch for enemy snipers.

The men are very keen on the job and we have quite got the superiority, altho' their snipers are very good shots. The worst of this place is the stench. The whole place is stiff with dead Turks and Australians. We have buried a few and do what we can altho' it is dangerous work. We shall manage to get the near ones under soon.

The sniper has just hit the top of my dugout<sup>1</sup> a fearful smack. Ernest Fletcher<sup>2</sup> who is reading said "Bow-wow."

The Turks started firing this morning about 3 a.m. and some of our men replied.

One or two had the jumps so I went and threatened to fall them in as soon as it was light and send them out in front to bury all the Turks they had killed. It amused them. The men are wonderfully steady and let the Turks simply blaze away without replying. It is an N.C.O. now and then who gets the jumps and opens fire.

<sup>1</sup> Dugouts did not exist in Gallipoli. We lived in holes in the ground governed as to depth by water and as to roofs by the fact that we had no roofing materials of any sort.

<sup>2</sup> Major E. Fletcher, my Second in Command.

## GALLIPOLI

We don't reply unless there is a good reason, as it only starts the whole Turk line firing, and our ration and water parties catch it badly.

The climate is ripping and I fancy the rain is finished with, and they feed us very well.

We can now and then get eggs and this morning for breakfast we are having cooked ham and eggs, bread, jam and tea. For lunch we shall have hot tinned stew and figs and probably the same for tea with some cheese. We cook in the fire trenches,<sup>1</sup> and I drink quarts of hot tea.

Yesterday we got hold of a tin of milk and some tinned butter of sorts.

We have no kit, but I have got a horse blanket and a ground sheet and my air pillow, and I never wake till I am woken or unless heavy firing starts.

I prow around a bit at nights, altho' there is no need, as the Company organisation is pretty good now and the men are fast getting settled.

Any extras in the food line you can think of will be very welcome. Any variety in the meat line (we have very good bacon and ham issued), such as tongue or sardines, potted meat or a cake or plum pudding, chocolates or sweets.

We are all dressed like tommies, and I carry web kit, pack and all, and a rifle. It is safer with these snipers, but the kind of warfare we are engaged in is not dangerous if you keep your head down, which I do.

<sup>1</sup> Our trenches were outlined each morning by a haze of smoke. The Turks had an issue of charcoal



## LETTERS FROM HELLES

We have a couple<sup>1</sup> of periscopes, but it would be a good thing if you were to send me one.

I am extremely fit and eat and sleep like anything, and now we are in more or less dry trenches I have no rheumatism at all when I wake up. Don't worry, I don't, and the men are very steady and reliable and *splendid diggers*,<sup>2</sup> which means a lot.

*Sat., 22/5/15.*

We were relieved from the firing line last night and came down near the base at the cost of only one casualty.

We are now for some days in a so-called rest camp, which is a collection of dugouts in a field. It is not much of a rest camp as it is shelled all day at unexpected moments, and you have to stick close in your dugout.

I tried to get out this morning after breakfast with Freddy Brown<sup>3</sup> and half-way across we heard two shells coming; we went flat just in time, but it wounded three men close to us. Luckily the Turk shrapnel is fairly innocuous and has very little effect.

Poor Milward Rogers was laid out by the previous shell. He was outside his dugout and got hit in the thigh; it is not at all bad as far as we know.

It is a bonny expedition. The rest camps are miles more dangerous than the fire trenches. We lost three killed and one wounded during our six days in the

<sup>1</sup> "A couple" is literally true.

<sup>2</sup> The men were mostly Wigan and district colliers, and the whole Battalion literally sank into the ground wherever it halted.

<sup>3</sup> Capt. F. S. Brown. Killed May, 1915.

## GALLIPOLI

fire trenches and already this morning we have had four wounded before 10 a.m. However, I have played the game before and am not taking unnecessary risks.

I slept in my valise last night with my boots off for the first time since we landed on May 6th, and shall have my first bath and change later on.

Our men are very steady and not at all liable to the jumps and I feel great confidence now in both officers and men. There was not a night in front when the Turks did not start blazing away on the French or someone, and our men never fired unless ordered. They also quite got the Turk snipers down.

They all dig, too, on their own and nearly every man in the Battalion now carries a pick or spade which he has snatched or picked up, left by other units who are too lazy to carry them, as well as their other kit. Our trenches have been splendid wherever we have been, and the Divisional and Brigade Staffs and the R.E. are very pleased with them. Our trench casualty list is far below anyone else's.

I had a ripping night's sleep from 2 a.m. to 8 a.m., and altho' the Turks shelled us at 5 a.m. it did not even wake me. I sleep well anyhow now in the fire trenches, altho' I generally turn out once or twice if firing starts.

It rained last night and I got somewhat wet, but the sun this morning has dried everything.

There is a devil of a musketry scrap going on ahead, and both sides have their guns going, but it usually means very little.

We have not had a shell here for an hour. I feel very fit and fat and eat tons and sleep well and conse-

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

quently I don't have any nerves and the shelling and shooting does not bother me.

The French<sup>1</sup> are fairly going it just at this moment. Brother Turk is a bit of a humorist, he signals washouts with a spade when our snipers miss him. We drew him all right yesterday. We rigged up a dummy and put it up, he had some shots at it and then got suspicious and stopped, so I told a man to lower the dummy, poke up a rifle on the parapet, and then shove the dummy up as if it was one of our snipers; that fairly fetched the Turk and when he had quite finished we shoved the dummy right up and wagged it at him.

The Turks put their bucket up to draw our snipers. and if one fires the Turk signals a miss.

We put a bully beef tin up to represent the end of a periscope and he hit it first shot. Two of our men played the ass and crawled out behind the trench to get a bit of kit. They had both been cautioned before about being fools and they were both killed first shot.

They are now shelling our field again, but their shrapnel is rotten. Freddy Gordon<sup>2</sup> and several men have been hit and only bruised and Fred Brown was knocked down by the burst of one quite unhurt.

We score over France very much here in the climate, it is perfectly lovely and the acres of poppies and daisies and the birds are simply beautiful.

The only thing that spoils the view up in the front

<sup>1</sup> Corps Expéditionnaire d'Orient.

<sup>2</sup> 1st Division Zouaves, Foreign Legion, Colonial Regiments, and 2nd Division 175th and 176th Regiments.

<sup>3</sup> Lieut. F. C. Gordon.

## GALLIPOLI

is the big number of dead Turks and Australians. We bury what we can at night, but it is dangerous work especially if a flare goes up. The smell is appalling. However, it is restful here and the responsibility of the front line is not there. Bar the shells I shall get a walk later on as one needs exercise in this kind of warfare.

I have my camera<sup>1</sup> here and am taking a few photos, but goodness knows when or where I will get them developed. There is no town here and no inhabitants<sup>2</sup> so far as I can see. All the farms are in ruins. I did hear a cock crow the other day, but it was behind the Turk trenches. I think they have dogs in their trenches, as we heard them bark the other morning. It might have been a fox or something of that sort.

My Aunt, what a rest Camp. They are at it again.

24/5/15.

We are still in our rest bivouac and shelled at odd times.

I found Postlethwaite<sup>3</sup> the night before last presiding over our dressing station in the next field, so I went and had a talk with him. He had dressed Milward's wound and said it was only slight in the thigh.

You must not picture us in deadly danger and doing the death and glory act *à la* the Graphic. We live absolutely underground, do our turn in the fire trenches, which is absolutely the safest place in the

<sup>1</sup> Cameras were allowed on Gallipoli.

<sup>2</sup> An officer joining us asked the Military Landing Officer where the nearest pub was.

<sup>3</sup> Capt. J. M. Postlethwaite, R.A.M.C.

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

Peninsular and spend the rest of our days digging and doing road making and other fatigue work day and night.

I hear now Milward's wound was more serious than they thought, but he is much better to-day and it is not quite to be catalogued as "dangerous."

Yesterday I went down to W Beach to see the ships, &c., and also had a paddle, and in the afternoon I went to Y Beach and watched two of our Companies bathing.

This morning I walked down on to the cliffs to have a look at the aeroplanes. I soon cleared off as brother Turk started to shell the aerodrome. The first shell fell right in the middle but did no damage.

It rained hard this morning early for several hours, but we don't mind as the sun soon comes out and dries everything very quickly.

It is ripping country and weather, and we thoroughly enjoy walking down to the shore and getting some exercise and at that long range you have plenty of time to get to cover, when you hear a shell coming your way, which is really not often.

29/5/15.

I have had no time to write lately. We were moved forward again to the fire trench and have since been making new forward trenches.

It is extraordinary how you can go out into the open and dig close to the Turk trenches. Poor Freddie Brown was killed dead during our first advance and we have had our Quartermaster, Taylor. G. Johnson,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lieut. W. G. Johnson, killed in France.

## GALLIPOLI

P. C. Fletcher and Parker<sup>1</sup> (joined at Alexandria) wounded.

We have been relieved of the forward work for a day or two and are having more or less of a rest, altho' we are still close up. We suffered rather yesterday in our forward trenches. The night we came here there had been heavy thunder storms and the trenches were full of water. The communication trench coming up took me well over the knees. I can't say I went to bed soaked as I never went to bed at all, the relief took the whole night. I am very well indeed and the wet did me no harm.

I still keep shaved and have no hair. I keep it cropped with clippers, but I don't get many baths.

It is getting very hot in the trenches by day, but the weather is ripping. Anchusa grows wild all over the place here.

The G.O.C. the force has expressed his satisfaction with the work done by our Brigade. Our officers and men are better than I hoped, and they don't care a damn for anything. The men are very calm and cool, and think things out for themselves.

Our digging is already known throughout the Peninsular, and it is quite a stock joke now.

I was on the cliffs the other day with my glasses and watched the torpedoing of one of our battleships, H.M.S. *Ocean*. It was close in and nearly all were saved. It was very interesting as you can imagine, but very sickening and made one very angry.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lieut. P. C. Fletcher. Lieut. A. S. Parker (Alexandria).

<sup>2</sup> The Turkish batteries on shore shelled the *Ocean* until the rescue boats started picking the crew out of the water; after that not another shell was fired.



## LETTERS FROM HELLES

Poor old Coy. Sgt.-Major Spencer was killed yesterday. He was with me in S.A. and was Arthur Simpson's<sup>1</sup> Col. Sergt. of the Leigh Company.

### *Copy of Order.*

O.C. 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th Battns.

Following message received begins :

I congratulate you and your gallant Brigade on their achievement under difficult circumstances, and I am confident that it is only a prelude to further good work.

Major-Genl. Douglas ends.

From G.O.C., 127th Brigade.

### *Five Trenches, 2/6/15.*

I am still very fit and untouched. You will be glad to hear that in case of an attack the Authorities do not allow C.O.'s to lead their men, they say that is the job of platoon commanders and that C.O.'s should be in the rear of their commands, where they can watch and influence events and keep in touch with their commands and with Brigade. So don't imagine me charging at the head of the Battalion. One has to sit on a telephone in comparative safety. It will not be your idea of my functions but it seems sound if you think of it. They say that things go wrong when a C.O. gets knocked out.

We are all fairly tired (I am not particularly, as I get a fair amount of sleep), but the Battalion is.

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Lt.-Col. A. W. W. Simpson, O.B.E., commanding 5th Manchester Regiment.

## GALLIPOLI

They have been digging without rest ever since May 6th, and our Brigade seems to be doing front line permanently. The others are behind and do not take their turn in relieving us. It is undoubtedly a compliment.

We are now "127 Brigade." Our battalion's casualties are mounting up, altho' we are still less than other people.

I am not supposed to tell you numbers, but the total is about twice my age,<sup>1</sup> rather more. We had 15 killed and 10 wounded three days ago in one trench from enfilade fire. All in one day.

I don't want any clothes or anything except as written in my letter from Cairo to you and I like Abdulla cigarettes.

I got a box containing chocolate, tobacco, cigs, etc., from you and very much appreciated it.

We were warned that old man Turk was going to have a shy at us last night, but he never came, altho' we could hear him chanting his prayers and shouting Allah, &c., &c., in his trenches about 9 p.m. He makes the most weird noises at times.

### *3/6/15.*

We were warned of a Turk attack again last night, but it never came off. I am very fit and will post this and write you another.

<sup>1</sup> Thirty-eight years.

### III.—THIRD BATTLE OF KRITHIA

*June 5th, '15.*

You will by now have seen in the papers that we had a big scrap yesterday, of which I can tell you the details later. Our casualties were heavy, and worst of all poor old Archie Brook, Sidney James and C. Leech<sup>1</sup> were killed.

It does not do under these circumstances to think too much about things, but I cannot help thinking of Sidney and Aunt Ruth and Mrs. Leech.

I cannot mention casualties, but they were Officers, the last numeral<sup>2</sup> in the year we were married in.

Men, about four-fifths of my Wigan Office telephone number.<sup>3</sup>

Poor old B Co. got rather mauled, but it was not their fault, they hung on long after the French retired on our right; so did A Co.

I am very fit but of course tired to-day, the strain of a modern fight is big. I got through without a scratch. My puggaree was cut slightly, and I had two bullets through my periscope. I spent most of my day in a trench at the end of a telephone.

<sup>1</sup> Lieut. G. S. James, brother of Lieut. F. James, killed Sept., 1915.  
Capt. A. C. Leech.

<sup>2</sup> Nine.

<sup>3</sup> Telephone No. 215.

### THIRD BATTLE OF KRITHIA

Both officers and men did perfectly splendidly, and I feel proud of them, and those that were killed were killed as *men* should be.

Brig.-Gen. Noel Lee was slightly wounded and Lord Rochdale<sup>1</sup> is in command.

He congratulated me on the Battalion and said they had astonished him and that he considered them magnificent.

I enclose the Corps Commander's chit and Gen. Douglas' on the same chit.

We are the 127th Brigade now. We have not been relieved from the front line yet altho' we have now had 15 days hard.

The other two Brigades were not in the front line and I fancy we were kept here to take the job on.

Our artillery bombardment was appalling, and I saw one of our Black Marias send a Turk at least 100 feet in the air. The Turks had the cheek to counter-attack our Battalion twice last night in small numbers.

We wiped the lot out as far as I can tell, only one reached the trench and he was promptly bayoneted.

Our men loved getting in with the bayonet. One man coming back with a bullet in his leg and one in his arm patted me on the back as he passed and said, "I don't care a damn, Colonel, I got three on the bayonet."

*7/6/15.*

We are still in the fire trench. Why, I don't know.

<sup>1</sup> Colonel Lord Rochdale came out with the Division in command of the 1/6th Bn. Lancashire Fusiliers.

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

The rest of the Brigade have been relieved, but we are still here.

Our men are played out for want of sleep, but are splendidly game. We have been counter-attacked three times and stopped it each time and our flanks have been bombing Turks and being bombed back by Turks in the same line of trenches<sup>1</sup> all the time. Sidney James was killed that way.

Archie Brook was killed absolutely outright whilst getting one of the guns or ammunition up.

Young Walker<sup>2</sup> was killed, too, and Clive Leech, Archie and Walker were all buried next to each other by our Brigade Chaplain.<sup>3</sup> I could not go as we were scrapping and have been for the last few days without ceasing. We have nine officers left for duty, including four battalion staff.

The Battalion has been splendid, but the Authorities are trying them up and I can't get them relieved. I think they rely on us a good deal.

I am *very well*.

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*42nd (East Lancs.) Division.*

The following message from Lt.-Gen. A. G. Hunter Weston, C.B., D.S.O., received at 6.33 p.m. on 4th June is published for information :—

"Please express to the 42nd Division and particularly to the 127th Brigade, my appreciation of the

<sup>1</sup> One was so used to being mixed up with the Turks that when a (naturally) excited officer of the Royal Naval Division rushed into Bn. H.Q. and shouted, "Do you know the Turks are in your front line?" Major Ernest Fletcher merely said, "Well, have a drink."

<sup>2</sup> Lieut. T. C. Walker, a brother of Capt. J. S. A. Walker.

<sup>3</sup> The Rev. E. T. Kerby.

## THIRD BATTLE OF KRITHIA

magnificent work done by them to-day. The 127th Brigade attacked punctually on time, and exactly in the manner ordered, dashing forward with gallantry and holding on to the objective with tenacity. It was a very fine performance."

Please convey this to all the troops of the Division where possible and tell them that I deeply appreciate their gallant conduct and devotion to their duty. The renown they have gained for the Division will not only reach the ears of all Lancashire, but throughout the British Empire.

I feel sure that the same tenacity will be maintained to-night and throughout the Campaign.

W. DOUGLAS,

Major-General,

Commanding 42 (E. Lancs.) Division.

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9/6/15.

I am *very well* and we are having a much needed rest. We were relieved from the fire trenches yesterday after 15 days of it, one big fight and nearly incessant minor fighting. We were ordered to 3rd line trenches, but I fancy Lord Rochdale, now commanding our Brigade (*vice* N. Lee,<sup>1</sup> wounded in the face), intervened, so we have been brought back to corps reserve for a rest. It is delightful to get rid of the responsibility of first line after 15 days, but they shell us like blazes here.

However, I stick in my dugout mostly. I got

<sup>1</sup> Brig.-General Noel Lee died of wounds.



## LETTERS FROM HELLES

smack in the middle of a shrapnel<sup>1</sup> burst yesterday and for the second time came out untouched.

The Division has been badly cut up and for very little so far as we can see. The last few days were very trying as we had the Turks in our trenches on both flanks, and it was bomb, bomb, bomb, morning, noon and night. Of course we were short of bombs and not old man Turk ! Our strength now is eight officers and the following number of men : multiply my Wigan office telephone by two and subtract 13. The other battalions are less by a long way. However, we manage to keep cheery and the men are splendid, they were quite steady to the end and only suffered from lack of sleep. They had none for three days and nights as we were counter-attacked three times<sup>2</sup> during the nights. They are now starting to shell us again ! However, we are so used to it we hardly notice. They can actually shell the beach. People coming out here from France are utterly astonished at the fighting here.<sup>3</sup> We are all quite certain the true facts are being kept back from the British public.

We had a tophole dinner last night. Bacon, sardines, potted meat, tinned apricots, cocoa (the first we have seen) a drop of port and a cigar.

<sup>1</sup> This shell apparently had no lead bullets in it, but was loaded with old brass clock wheels and other scrap.

<sup>2</sup> It was not certain whether one of these attacks was Turks or some belated Fusiliers trying to regain our front line. Private G. Carr of the 5th said, "I'll damned soon see," climbed over the parapet, ran towards the enemy trenches, flung himself on his face, and shouted, "Fire, They're Turks." Private Carr got back untouched, but was afterwards killed.

<sup>3</sup> Whether in rest or not the troops were in every battle, as there was no depth in our position : also the proportion of killed to wounded was high and few prisoners were taken.

## THIRD BATTLE OF KRITHIA

I turned in about 10.30 and slept till 9 a.m. I shall sleep again this afternoon as I have a lot of arrears to make up.

It is difficult to sleep by day as the sun is so hot and there is nothing to make a roof of.

Don't think I am downhearted. One could not be so with my battalion, what is left of them. They are so cheery and steady. They simply loved getting in with the bayonet on the 4th. Our men did not fire a single shot when we charged.

They jumped out of their trench, legged it splendidly across the 200 yards of open and bayoneted every Turk in the trench. Only two escaped that I could hear of. One of our men saw five Turks escaping down a communication trench, so he jumped out in the open, ran down the trench, jumped in in front of the Turks and drove them back on to our men's bayonets. There were no wounded.

Two of our Companies then went on to the next position and collared that. However, the French on the right retired, then the Naval Division and then the 7th Manchesters leaving B Co. with their flank 800 yards in the air. They hung on splendidly<sup>1</sup> for about three hours and then gradually fell back as the Turks were then round them. This left A Co.'s flank in the air. They hung on from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m., when I ordered them back on my own. They were gradually being cut to pieces. Both companies lost nearly 40 per cent. and stuck it.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Ian Hamilton in his "Gallipoli Diary" says, "By all the laws of war they ought to have tumbled back anyhow, but by the laws of the Manchesters they hung on and declared they could do so for ever."

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

They came back cursing and swearing that there were no reinforcements to help them to stick it, and quite calm only *very* angry.<sup>1</sup>

I tried to get reinforcements of course, *but there were none*. There *never* are here.

That is our experience in every show.

Don't send me blankets or heavy stuff. I can't cart them about. I only have what I and my servant can carry about.

We have no transport and all our pack-horses and mules have been killed.

I got three more mules last night and they were killed this morning during the shelling. It is astonishing how happy and cheerful we keep. Good food and a rest now and then make one feel that one would not call "King George one's Uncle."<sup>2</sup>

I am lying on my bed now quite comfortable and happy, have had a good lunch and am smoking a cigar and just comfortably sleepy.

The dust and flies are beastly and these shells, but they don't disturb me much.

Mrs. Ronald Lindsay sends me a plum pudding every so often, which is very nice. Cakes are the things we like.

The 6th Manchesters have nearly been wiped out. It is sickening.

I shall sleep now. I am very well and quite happy, and very comfortable and my nerves have stood the strain without any give at all.

<sup>1</sup> I was unpopular for several days for having forced them to come back.

<sup>2</sup> A Wigan expression of well-being.

## IV.—IMBROS—TRENCH WARFARE

*June 14, '15.*

I am *very* well and we are having a ripping rest away from even odd shells.

The whole brigade the night before last was put on to trawlers, etc., and sent across to a neighbouring island (Imbros) to reorganize. It is a ripping island, exactly like Lewis or Harris. We have got tents. This morning I had a bathe in the sea before breakfast and then we had breakfast, bacon and eggs and jam, among the rocks, just like we do at Tarbert. The great relief is to be in a place where you can walk about without getting shot at or shelled. Annie from Asia can't even reach us and we don't care a damn for aeroplanes. One came over yesterday and dropped bombs on us. We were very lucky getting across: we came in the dark and Annie never fired a shot. She generally shells the beach at nights. You don't know the tremendous relief it is to feel really safe, especially after 15 days in the first line and one big scrap thrown in. There are not 30 officers left in the Brigade, and only about 40 per cent. of the men. How long we shall be here I don't know, but I am afraid it will only be for four days. It *may be* longer. I don't think anyone at home has an idea of the kind of

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

fighting here unless they can gather from the enormous casualty lists.

Our trouble is that when we are sent in reserve it is more dangerous than the fire trenches, as every inch of the Peninsula is systematically searched and shelled.

We have just heard that old Milward Rogers has died from wounds, and I am afraid it is true.

The worst of being out of the fighting is that one, for the first time perhaps, realizes one's losses. One cannot afford, however, to think of them too much.

Old man Turk is such an excellent fighter that one has to keep one's tail up and one's officers' tails up to compete with him.

My Battalion and the 6th Manchesters have been magnificent and utterly steady throughout it all. One thing is certain that the 5th and 6th Manchesters<sup>1</sup> could not have done much better and when loosed they went as straight as dies and what is more in all the stress carried out the orders.

"A" Co. under Talbot Woods<sup>2</sup> hung on all day splendidly with the Turks on their flank and rear and suffered very much.

I have sent in Frank James' name for bombing up a Turk trench with only one man, also Kenneth Burrows<sup>3</sup> for climbing out of a trench under heavy fire from the Turks and *from our own artillery* and holding up a red screen to show our guns they were

<sup>1</sup> The 5th and 6th were working together and relieved each other in the trenches.

<sup>2</sup> Afterwards Col. W. T. Woods, D.S.O., M.C.

<sup>3</sup> Capt. M. K. Burrows, M.C.

## IMBROS—TRENCH WARFARE

firing on his Company. How he escaped I don't know.

16/6/15.

We are still on this island reorganizing, but are afraid we shall have to go back soon to the Peninsula.

It is raining like anything this morning, and I am thankful we are here under canvas and not squelching in the trenches. I did not have my before-breakfast bathe to-day, as it was so wet and blowing such a gale. Did I tell you that Parson Komlosy<sup>1</sup> is on the Peninsula, he rolled up in my dugout the other day. We are hoping they will leave us here until some drafts come out from home to fill us up. We are only a nucleus now, but if we go back again now we shall soon cease to be even that and the best course would seem to be to fill us up, when our old hands would train the new drafts. This island is ripping. I went a walk yesterday with Rochdale and it reminded me every step exactly of the west coast islands.<sup>2</sup> Rocks and scrub.

17/6/15.

I went a walk yesterday over the Naval flying station; they gave us tea there, honey and bread and butter. The first butter I have tasted since I left Cairo. A tin of butter is a good thing to send.

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. F. Komlosy, formerly a curate in Wigan, attached 29th Division.

<sup>2</sup> W. Coast of Scotland.



## LETTERS FROM HELLES

18/6/15.

I am very well. Sir Ian Hamilton inspected the Brigade this morning and seemed very pleased with the appearance of the men. They certainly look a hardy lot now. They are attaching officers to us from K.'s armies. I wish we had our own from home instead.

We are still on this island, much to our surprise, and are afraid we may be biffed back to the Peninsula any day.

We are hoping with luck to be left here till our drafts arrive, but of course we may be wanted. I wonder what Manchester and Wigan will think of our losses, 86 officers killed and wounded out of 129 is a bit thick. I am sorry for the Walkers, one brother killed in France and one killed here. Jim Walker<sup>1</sup> has now been sent away sick with neuritis.

The cream you sent me was ripping. We had it last night for dinner with cherries, which you can buy here.

Sir I. H.<sup>2</sup> asked me when I got command. I told him, and he said, "I suppose you have had lots of chances of getting rid of it lately." I expect you will think it sorry wit.

Sunday, 20/6/15.

I have just come in from early service and am waiting for breakfast. The service was on the hill-side.

<sup>1</sup> Major J. S. A. Walker.

<sup>2</sup> General Sir Ian Hamilton.

## IMBROS—TRENCH WARFARE

We still have no orders to return to the Peninsula, but as we have now had a week's rest we may get them any time, unless we are to be here till our drafts come.

One of the German submarines was nearly bottled yesterday. She got foul of our nets in the Straits and had to come up, and those French lost their opportunity and never fired at her. One shell or a maxim would have sent her to the bottom.

The French guns cover our sector of the trenches and we are great friends with their observing officer who lives with us when we are up there, Lt. Marie. I have got a photo of him in our dugout, if it is ever developed.

Did you read the official account of the 4th of June in the ——— of the 7th? Goodness knows who compiles these things, but it is a rotten account and extremely inaccurate to say the least of it.

Breakfast is ready, so I will write more later. The guns on Gallipoli have been busy all morning and are still at it. Turk guns, you bet, not ours.

21/6, 15.

We have just had orders to go back to the Peninsula.

It will interest you to know who are left with the Battalion: Self, E. Fletcher, Cunningham, Cronshaw, Sanders, Bryham, Woods, Slaughter and Frank James.<sup>1</sup> The others are casualties except Simpson,<sup>1</sup> who was sent back medically unfit to Alexandria,

<sup>1</sup> Lt.-Col. H. C. Dartington, Major E. Fletcher, Capt. Cunningham, R.A.M.C., Major A. E. Cronshaw, Capt. J. M. Sanders (Adjutant), Capt. A. L. Bryham, Capt. W. T. Woods, Lieut. A. Slaughter, Lieut. F. James, Capt. A. W. W. Simpson, Lieut. J. N. Holden—all these officers survived the War except F. James.

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

and Holden,<sup>1</sup> who was injured, Jim Walker, who is in hospital. Cunningham has been wounded once and recovered.

22/6/15.

We got orders to embark for the old spot<sup>2</sup> at 6.30 p.m. yesterday, and within 1½ hours we (the 5th) were on board two trawlers which brought us back to the old spot and the old noise. We saw nothing of our friends the submarines and Annie from Asia (she apparently has had triplets<sup>3</sup> in the last week) was taking a rest, so we had an uneventful crossing. Our new Brigadier has taken over, by name Herbert Lawrence,<sup>4</sup> an old cavalry officer. He seems very nice, but we are sorry to lose Rochdale.

We have had a Taube over this morning and during breakfast watched an aeroplane chase it with no result. No doubt the Taube was over to spot for Annie, who was firing all the time about 300 yards short of our dugouts.

I suppose we shall go into the trenches to-night or very soon. The week at "Blackpool" has done us all a lot of good and I thoroughly enjoyed it, altho' it was all too short.

Arthur Slaughter<sup>5</sup> has gone back now, but I hope a day or two will see him back. It makes us shorter than ever. I wish some of the wounded officers

<sup>1</sup> See p. 49.

<sup>2</sup> Helles, Gallipoli.

<sup>3</sup> The reputed father was "Quick Dick," a quickfiring neighbour of Annie's.

<sup>4</sup> General Sir H. A. Lawrence, afterwards Chief of Staff to Earl Haig.

<sup>5</sup> Lieut. A. Slaughter.

## IMBROS—TRENCH WARFARE

would come back. Old man Turk is distinctly aggressive just now and has, I fancy, been chasing ——— in our absence. I think our fellows will teach him a lesson with any luck.

Albert Smith, Labour Member for Clitheroe, has just been attached to our 8th Bn. from K.'s army. I hope these K.'s lot are good. They *look* pretty mixed. When we are asked, as we have just been, for a fatigue party to go to the beach, we actually have to send them in small dribblets, or else they get shelled like blazes. Just fancy being shelled at your base! We think it a bit thick to chuck our Brigade back into the trenches so short of officers that are old hands. Why we cannot get some from our home Battalions I can't think.

I am enclosing a letter I have just got from Major Hutchinson of the Munsters, Regulars. He was all through the landing here and was attached to us. The first thing I did when we arrived was to apply for someone to be attached to give us the tips about trench warfare, so they attached a regular to each Batta. You will see what he thinks about the Battalion.

Gen. Douglas has just been round to see us. He is a changed man, so very friendly and affable and no grouses. He is very bucked with our brigade, and I heard him tell some of our men that they had done splendidly and that no troops in the world could have done better.

Brig.-Gen. Lawrence, our new Brigadier, told the C.O.'s he was very proud to come and command our Brigade as it had made a reputation for itself on

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

the Peninsula. Altogether we are in great favour at the moment. I hope it will last, especially after we get our drafts! We are so few now that two-thirds of the Brigade will be new stuff, who had not the training we had in Egypt and an enormous percentage of new officers. However! The poor 8th had all their seniors killed and are at present commanded by a new Sub from K.'s army and no adjutant. The 7th are commanded by their adjutant.

We go up into the trenches to-morrow. I have only three old officers for four Coys.

I am writing in my dugout and it is very hot and the flies defy description.

I am thinking of going and having a bathe shortly (it is now 4 p.m.), but shall have to see, as it is almost time for Annie and her whelps to tune up, and walking about is very unhealthy when she starts throwing Jack Johnsons about.

Komlosy came to lunch to-day, but had no news. Ernest Fletcher and I are dining to-night with Gen. Douglas.

28/6/15. 2.15 p.m.

I am quite fit again and on full work and full food. I was on my way up to the trenches two nights ago when I heard the Brigade was coming down. We went into rest dugouts and yesterday went up again and took over a section of fire and support trenches we had not been in before.

We could not understand why, but we know now. There has been another push on to-day on the left.

## IMBROS—TRENCH WARFARE

quite successful so far. We were put on the right of the attacking troops to be responsible for a very difficult piece of ground and a muddle where our trenches and the Turks are absolutely mixed up. The Authorities expect, if a counter attack is made, that it will be made against the trenches we are in. It is a great compliment to the Brigade to be chosen. The counter attack has not come off so far, but to-night is the dangerous time, if old man Turk can face it after the artillery punching he has had to-day. My head rings now with the noise of our guns. We have had no show yet except a very thorough shelling. No damage done that I know of, altho' very unpleasant at times when they start rafales on you, according to their unpleasant habits. Our dugout has a good many shrapnel balls lying about it, but they did no harm. The flies are awful and so is the smell in places, as there are a lot of dead up here who have not been able to be got at yet.

I do hope you won't worry, I am very well and get lots of good food and sleep like a log. I don't worry myself at all and find my nerves are all right and that I don't get the jumps at all. In fact I am quite content and enjoy it all in a way, altho' I shall be very glad when it is over and don't pretend I prefer it to Parbold.<sup>1</sup>

It is very much worse to think of at home than it is really. It becomes one's normal life and you don't care twopence for the minor discomforts there are. If you could just change places with me for a week

<sup>1</sup> A pre-War camping place for the Wigan Companies of the 5th Manchester Regt.



## LETTERS FROM HELLES

and see things from inside my brain, you would go home after your week was up and never worry any more. At home one thinks of it as "so dreadful."

Is it blazes? It is unpleasant at times, but it is your normal life and a good shelling now worries us just about as much as getting caught in a rainstorm at home without an umbrella. I am not piling it on. As I wrote the last sentence the Turks put four shells on to our line within 50 yards of here. Result no damage and nobody even looked up. There goes another! I am *not* pulling your leg. I am writing the literal truth for your comfort if you will only believe it. There's another shell, Sanders has called it an unprintable name!

I shall post this to-day. Everything is quiet now (4 p.m.) except intermittent rifle fire and shelling.

You ought to see me with my new way of wearing the hair, I keep it clipped off with clippers.

It is much healthier and very comfortable. Probably I shall take to it when I get home.

I am glad Jules<sup>1</sup> is getting to the front, it will just suit him and he will thoroughly enjoy it, except at times.

The parcels you sent have not turned up yet, but no doubt they will in time. I am looking forward specially to the cigars and cakes, café au lait, sweets and shortbread. Bullseyes are *Ar*. Both cigars and cakes are tremendously welcome.

We get chits here every day telling us the Turkish morale is gone. We haven't noticed it in the trenches.

<sup>1</sup> My brother-in-law, afterwards Col. C. J. Hirst, M.C., commanding the Yorkshire Dragoons.

## IMBROS—TRENCH WARFARE

29/6/15.

I finished a letter yesterday telling you about yesterday's scrap, but it started again later and went on all day. A Company of our new T.'s were driven out of a trench (they had a frightful gruelling and can't be blamed), and then others tried to retake it. I saw two attacks nearly wiped out and one Turk counter-attack completely wiped out, and the trench so far as I know still belongs to old man Turk. They shelled us here badly all day till dark at a cost of five men wounded. I should think it cost about £300 a man at least! The 6th and part of the 5th were in our firing line and the expected counter attack by the Turks never came off. I spent all night up till 2 a.m. in the fire trench with Philip Holberton,<sup>1</sup> who was at Shrewsbury with me, the adjutant of the 6th. Nothing happened except shooting and bombing. Holberton and I were near one bombing station when a Turk bomb was thrown over. One of the 6th Coy. Sgt.-Majors, who has already been wounded twice and got a D.C.M., picked up the bomb and tried to throw it back. He was too late and the beastly thing went off. It wounded the Sgt.-Major in 14 places and broke both his wrists, as far as we could tell.

No one else was touched luckily.

The Sgt.-Major was patched up and *walked* out of the trenches. He is a bank clerk at home. Stout fellow.

<sup>1</sup> Capt. Philip Holberton of the Manchester Regiment and adjutant of the 15th Manchester Regt. Killed in France, to the great sorrow of all. A first-class soldier, and a man of infinite jest, a good companion in peace or war.

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

I have just had a wash all over in my bucket in our washing dugout, and a complete change and feel very clean. The set of underclothes I have on now are in absolute rags.

I think things are going pretty well here now, but fancy it will take some time and cost us a heap of casualties.

I shall shave now.

30/6/15.

We were ordered up last night to take over the firing line with the remains of the battalion and a nice place it is too. A regular mix-up with the Turks and three bombing stations where we bomb each other over a barricade. I was talking last night to one of our new subs<sup>1</sup> from K.'s army when a bullet came and killed him dead. Poor chap! There was a lot of firing and scrapping again last night, and I was up most of the night again. I sleep in snatches at any time when I can and it does not seem to affect me. Our battalion always seems to do more time in the fire trenches than any other for some reason or other, and the difficulty is the shortage of officers. The strain is very big on them and they have no one to relieve them. We want officers and reorganization badly.

7.15 p.m. We have had an exciting day. The Turks at one of our bombing stations have about three places they can bomb us from and we have only one. They were playing Old Harry this morning until one of our

## IMBROS—TRENCH WARFARE

snipers managed to kill one of their bombers and hit another, since when their bombing has ceased and we have been stirring them up with a trench mortar. To-night we are going to do some scrapping and try and get even with them.

I went up to the place this afternoon with a R.E. officer to decide what we should do and was there about half an hour. I can tell you I was very glad to get away without having a bomb over.

Col. Tufnell,<sup>1</sup> chief of our divisional staff, was coming up the trenches this afternoon and got hit in the arm. A chit has just come in saying it is important to deepen our communication trenches!

The trenches we take over are usually rotten, like these, and our men work like niggers and gradually make them safe. It is rather hard on our men, but they undoubtedly have got a lot of kudos from the Authorities for it. They certainly do work well. These trenches are perfectly beastly and in some places you can't dig at all as they are full of dead Turks. However, one looks on a dead Turk, poor chap, rather as one looks on a sardine or a dead cockroach at home.

The heat yesterday was terrific, but it is cooler this evening, which is a blessing. The weather keeps very lovely all the same.

Here is dinner; soup, cold mutton, bread and jam, cheese and tea.

There has been another scrap to-day on the French side which went very well and I saw a fair number of Turks running back like rabbits with the French

<sup>1</sup> Col. A. W. Tufnell, C.M.G., D.S.O., G.S.O.I., 42nd Division.

<sup>1</sup> Lieut. Iveson, 16th D.L.I.

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

75's plunking shrapnel right on them. They laid out most of them.

I have just had the soup, thick mutton broth with real onions in it. Absolutely tophole and very hot. Our battalion H.Q. Mess Cook got badly wounded in the back to-day, so one's servants are cooks for us, or rather my Stuart<sup>1</sup> is. Here is the cold leg of mutton (mutton is a rarity round here), with boiled potatoes and onions. Sanders is cursing and swearing.<sup>2</sup> Toasted cheese has just arrived.

3/7/15.

I am waiting for my breakfast after a round of the trenches. It poured last night and about 11 p.m. my roof made of ground sheets fell in full of water and drowned me out. I was pretty tired as I did not go to bed the night before. I sat down on a seat cut in the side of my dugout and slept solid till 4 this morning. It is extraordinary how you can sleep anywhere on these shows. We got word on the 1st that the Turks were landing more troops and as our piece of ground is very tricky and the nearest to the Turks anywhere on the Peninsula, I thought I would stay up all night in the fire trenches. About 1 a.m. our observers reported that the Turks were reinforcing their trenches in front of us. I could not see anything at

<sup>1</sup> Private Alexander Stuart of Wigan. Shot through the shoulder later on. Hearing the noise, I went to see who had got it. Stuart's companion informed me that Alec was a hard lad and that it sounded same as hitting a plank. I entirely agree. Alec came through the War in spite of being torpedoed.

<sup>2</sup> I don't remember why.

## IMBROS—TRENCH WARFARE

first but after a bit I could see small parties of them not more than 150 yards away advancing across the open and dropping into the trenches.

We got about 10 men and opened controlled fire on them when we got the chance, and about 2 a.m. I ordered the "stand to" and reported to Brigade. It is very funny they did not attack us, I made certain they intended to, but it never came off. Our men did very well bombing. When we got up there the Turks had absolutely got the upper hand, and when we left yesterday we were top dogs.

We managed to kill their most impudent bomber by a judiciously placed sniper and we adopted the policy of "2 bombs to 1." It succeeded very well. The 6th Manchesters<sup>1</sup> relieved half our battalion yesterday and half of us came back into support.

We always have to leave 2 Coys. up as the 6th are so short of men.

It is rough luck on our men, but they never complain, and we always seem to do more than our share.

The trenches were utterly unsafe when we got in, and we have left them good trenches, but it means hard work. Goodness knows what the previous inhabitants do. The R.E. told me previous units refused to work and did nothing but sleep. It is a damned shame.

We have got five more officers from K.'s army, who seem quite all right, but none of our wounded are back yet. I wish they would come.

<sup>1</sup> The men of the 5th and 6th worked particularly well together in spite of social distinctions. The 6th called us "the flashy fifth" and they were known as "collars and cuffs."



## LETTERS FROM HELLES

*Noon.* The sun is blazing again and all my things are out drying. In fact it is very hot and I am sitting in my shirt sleeves, my usual costume, under the shade of a ground sheet. The only thing which saves us from the very trying heat is a cool breeze, which very rarely drops except at night.

The whole country is a perfect maze of trenches, the Turks and ours, and you can walk miles and miles underground, if you want to. I have had quite a long walk this morning underground. I met Gen. Lawrence, who congratulated me on the tremendous improvements we had made.

I got a lot of your parcels yesterday and they are very welcome. The shortbread, café au lait, cakes and cigars are very much sought after and everything arrives in splendid condition. Thank you for taking such a lot of trouble packing and sewing up, it just makes all the difference.

The cigars are a great treat, and we smoke them after dinner with café au lait on the rare occasions when we have either of them.

I wish the "Ross" periscope<sup>1</sup> would turn up as it would be valuable and very often save one the necessity of using glasses over a trench, which I don't do often, I can promise you. It is 6.30 now in the evening; late rounds are going on, both our guns and the Turks. The Turks are shelling the beach, so I don't mind. The noise of a shell is rather soothing when it is going *high* over you.

<sup>1</sup> An inconspicuous periscope with a fairly high magnification. The only one I ever used in Gallipoli which was not smashed by snipers.

## IMBROS—TRENCH WARFARE

4/7/15. 6 a.m.

It poured again last night! I have reopened this to dry it. What a game, but I feel very well.

## 127TH INFANTRY BRIGADE

### V.—127TH INFANTRY BRIGADE

7/7/15.

The day before yesterday the Turks made an attack at dawn which was supposed to be a great attack along our whole front.

The attacks on our left and right came on and were repulsed with apparently heavy losses. The attack against us in the centre never came home, and we now hear that the Turks for this attack could not be driven on.

Our men on the left had some shooting, but nothing much. They slew one Turk, I imagine a scout, who put his head up out of the scrub and had a good look round. Our men were very amused the way he poked his head up and peered round. He was christened "Audacious Alfred," and one man said, "He was looking for his iron ration," which caused much laughter.

It seems rather rough luck on "Alfred," our men had five minutes' hilarity at his expense and then plugged him through the head. They bagged a few more as well.

Yesterday I got a chit about 3 p.m. to hand over command temporarily to E. Fletcher and report to Brigade office. I could not imagine what was up

and thought perhaps I was to be stellenbosched.<sup>1</sup> When I reported, Gen. Lawrence told me that he was going on a special mission and that I was to take command of the Brigade until his successor was appointed, so here I am living in a proper dugout with a roof, in command of the 127th Inf. Brigade until some regular can be found to take over. If he turns up to-day I can at any rate say I have commanded a brigade in war.

I know you will be proud to think that I have been entrusted with the Brigade and an important sector of the fire trenches. I live in a maze of dugouts, telephone wires, etc., about a mile behind the firing line, and had a bath last night in a proper canvas bath and a whole night in bed without disturbance.

I met one of our men the other night climbing back out of the Turk trench over the sandbag partition where we play with bombs now and then. I asked him where he had been and he said he had been collecting firewood!

Our men absolutely take the prize, they do the most extraordinary things and look at everything from such a curious point of view. When one of our observers was shot through the head and killed the other night, a voice from the darkness said, "Has he got his rations on him, sergeant?"<sup>2</sup>

I have had my breakfast like a gent for once, at a

<sup>1</sup> A South African War term. The equivalent in this war was "getting a bolar hat."

<sup>2</sup> A member of the staff who was with me at the time was rather shocked. He did not come from Wigan as I did. On another occasion when a cockhouse an open-air one, was blown sky high and the surrounding landscape littered with rice, all the Master-Cook said was, "It favours a b—— wedding."

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

table and nice and cool under a roof. The only drawback is a dense cloud of flies. I don't feel any qualms about leaving the battalion with Ernest Fletcher. He has done very well and is quite cool and collected, also the men are very good now and are only very keen for the Turks to attack them.

The French 75's are going through their usual performance of deluging some wretched Turk trench with shells, they really are magnificent gunners. All the same I don't think old man Turk minds. Guns on trenches don't seem to matter much unless it is a regular deluge of high explosives. We sit happily whilst the Turks put a few hundred shells round and about our trenches and as a rule there are very few casualties. Frank James had two practically in his dugout the day before yesterday. There were three officers in it and no one was hurt, although they were deafened.

It seems very quaint, even temporarily, to be in command of a brigade in war and how long it will last I don't know, anyhow it is pretty safe, and one gets a bath, comfortable meals, shade from the sun (which is worth more than you imagine) and with good luck a good sleep every night. There is not a great deal to do as things are running smoothly, and everything is quiet for the moment. It is funny having to deal with questions as Brigadier which yesterday I was arguing with Brigade!

I tried to take a photo of a Turk we had slain yesterday, but I don't think it will come out.<sup>1</sup> At any rate it should show the inside of the Turk trench! The periscopes have not turned up yet. They will

<sup>1</sup> It came out very well indeed.

## 127TH INFANTRY BRIGADE

be very useful as the Turk snipers smash a lot. They are of course issued to us but get broken very quickly.<sup>1</sup> We are carrying respirators now, altho' so far no gas has been used against us. We always carry them on us in the trenches.<sup>2</sup>

6 p.m. I have just come back from Divisional H.Q. with my four Commanding Officers from a pow-wow. Gen. Douglas was very polite.

My Commanding Officers consist of two Majors and two Captains.—

Major E. Fletcher, 5th Manch. Regt.

Major C. R. Pilkington, 6th Manch. Regt.

Capt. P. Creagh (Leicesters), 7th Manch. Regt.

Capt. Ross (Soudanese), 8th Manch. Regt.

11/7/15.

I enclose some odds and ends, especially Ian Hamilton's order of June 8th. You need not address my letters to "Brig.-Gen. Darlington," as I feel certain the Brigade will get a regular<sup>3</sup> pretty soon. But at any rate for the moment I am a General, and am addressed as such! The whole thing is pretty humorous and I don't know what is going to happen.

It happened like this: Division got a wire from G.H.Q. (Ian H.) for Brig.-Gen. Lawrence to report there and to hand over 127 Brigade to next senior until a successor was appointed. Gen. Lawrence

<sup>1</sup> Our trenches were so close to the Turks that snipers were probably shooting at not more than 30 yards.

<sup>2</sup> The Turk never used gas.

<sup>3</sup> I was a civilian.



## LETTERS FROM HELLES

handed over to me and went to G.H.Q. to report himself. Division never heard anything more until they saw the enclosed orders, which came as a great shock to them! There are two explanations: (1) that the promotion to Brig.-Gen. was a routine mistake, or (2) that General Lawrence recommended me to G.H.Q.

I feel pretty certain that (1) is the correct solution, as I don't think G.H.Q. would give the promotion without consulting Division.

However, the matter remains that I am "General D." until the promotion is cancelled or until a regular is appointed to take over, when I go back to being a common Lt.-Col. It causes me a good deal of amusement anyway. I am very fit and have only a slight common rick in a neck muscle. The cause was *not* common.

I was up in the dugout<sup>1</sup> of the 6th Battn., H.Q., yesterday when the Turks started to shell it; they shelled us out all right and we cleared. When it was over we went back to have our tea and had not properly started when old man Turk opened again and burst one on the near parapet. I got some of the back blast right in the face, it was as hot as blazes and jerked my head back.

Hence my rick, which, however, is nearly all right to-day.

Old man Turk is very busy shelling us this morning, but this dugout is very good and has a splinter proof roof.

Unfortunately he thinks there is a battery close to

<sup>1</sup> A hole in the ground open to the sky.

## 127TH INFANTRY BRIGADE

and keeps trying to knock it out. He knocked out the tail of the Staff Captain's<sup>1</sup> shirt yesterday, but that is the only damage. It was hanging out airing. This job keeps me pretty busy and I get a lot of exercise now touring the trenches, but it is most awfully interesting, and I should of course like to keep it, altho' I am quite certain that it is sound to give Brigades to regulars only.

They never promoted Rochdale whilst he was in temporary command. Anyway I don't expect to keep it, but they can't do me out of having been a General and they can't do me out of anyhow a week's pay at the rate of about £1,000 a year!

I keep very fit.

Since finishing, they have been shelling us and I hope I have got some very good photos of their shells bursting just outside on the road.<sup>2</sup>

12/7/15.

The Brigade were taken out of the fire trenches last night to rest trenches. As soon as the 5th arrived in theirs, a shell came right in and killed one man, took the leg off another and wounded a third.

I am afraid our rest will be very short. Now it is past history, it will interest you to know that the Brigade went into action on 4th June about 2,700 strong and came out about 1,400. Of course these figures are only approximate.

There is a terrific bombardment by our guns going

<sup>1</sup> Capt. T. N. C. Nevill, 6th Manchester Regt.

<sup>2</sup> These photographs came out very well.

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

on now and they are chucking simply tons of high explosives on to the Turk trenches opposite the French. There has already been a scrap this morning on the left, so we are all standing by for a noisy day. In other words, there is a show on, but we are not in it unless it develops unexpectedly. I am very glad to get the Brigade out, they have done 18 days in the front trenches on end and the 6th Battn. are so weak that two Coys. of the 5th had to be permanently in the fire trenches the whole 18 days. It comes rather stiff on them, but does not seem to make much impression on them. They are quite happy and have no imaginations and no nerves of any description.

As long as they get a bit of firewood to fry their bacon with and a limited amount of sleep they are quite satisfied, and they look upon the Turk as a comic of the deepest dye. Their one hope always being that the Turk will muster up enough courage to attack them.

The din of our guns is simply appalling. Luckily we are not very close to any, but we are so packed up on the Peninsula that you can't get away from anything.

You will be glad to hear that my ricked neck is practically right this morning.

If you see my name in the paper at any time as wounded don't get excited, you are probably returned as wounded if you get a scratch. The Brigade M.G. officer<sup>1</sup> who is sitting opposite me now was returned as wounded for a scratch on the head and has never been off duty for a second.

<sup>1</sup> Capt. F. Hayes, M.C., 7th Manchester Regt.

## 127TH INFANTRY BRIGADE

The majority of wounds are very slight, as the Turk bullet is very merciful and they don't tamper with it. In fact they seem very gentlemanly fighters, and I have a great respect for them.

I wish breakfast would turn up. The head and lung wounds that recover are simply extraordinary. You see dead men taken out on stretchers and a few weeks after hear that they are all right.

*Noon.* The French, I believe, have rushed some more trenches. The bombardment has stopped, but I should think we chucked 7 or 8,000 high explosives at the Turk trenches between 6 and 10 a.m.

Annie from Asia put a big one in one of our batteries about 500 yards from here about an hour ago. I don't know what happened to the guns, but I can see 3 or 4 dead gunners lying about and the stretchers were pretty busy afterwards. There is only desultory gun fire now, but heavy rifle fire and several men have been wounded.

There is a white flag out just in front of Krithia village, it means nothing, I fancy, as the Turks seem to use them as artillery marks or something of that sort. Anyhow I have reported it to Division.

13/7/15.

There was an attack yesterday, which I think went all right, but have no definite news yet.

I never saw such a sight in *my life* as the bombardment of the Turk trenches and of Achi Baba by our guns and the 75's, all throwing high explosives. It is utterly impossible to describe and beyond anything you can imagine.

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

The ground is so dry and sandy here that a big shell throws up earth, etc., probably several hundred feet high and 3 times I saw Turks flung up over 100 feet.

A Turk shell killed 2 and wounded 4 of the 5th. Bad Luck.

I got your letters up to June 23rd and parcels. The underclothes came and the Trench periscope.

APPOINTMENTS, COMMISSIONS, REWARDS, ETC.

APPROVED BY

THE GENERAL COMMANDING MEDITERRANEAN  
EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

(Subject to War Office approval where authority is not quoted).

List No. 6.

*General Headquarters,  
8th July, 1915.*

Command and Staff.

(n) Lieut.-Col. H. C. Darlington, 1/5 Battn. The Manchester Regt., is appointed to temporarily command 127 Infantry Brigade *vice* Brig.-Gen. The Hon H. A. Lawrence, appointed Deputy Inspector Gen of Communications, and is granted the temporary rank of Brigadier-General while so employed. dated 6th July, 1915.

14/7/15.

I have had to-day more letters from you up to June 27th. You ask me if my hair is going grey!

## 127TH INFANTRY BRIGADE

I don't think so, as I feel very fit and not a day older, but anyhow I can't tell you what colour it is, as I have it cropped close to my skull every week with clippers. In fact, I don't wear any hair now at all. It is more sanitary and if you do get a scalp wound much better for you.

There is no need for you to picture me tired and hungry. I get tons to eat and with your parcels live very well. One does get tired of course at times, but it does not seem to have much effect. I am not dismal either, we are very quickly teaching old man Turk that we are better than he is. He is a good fighter and full of pluck, but we have undoubtedly got his tail down now and can take his trenches when we please. Of course, it is costly work and slow, as he has line after line of them, and it is bound to be a tough and long job, but we have no fear of him now. In fact our men regard him as a comic with a nasty bite in his tail.

I have not been deposed yet! I am still drawing pay!

We have had a rotten time in these trenches, and have lost in the Brigade 7 killed and about 50 wounded during the last 3 days' fighting without coming out of our dugouts or firing a shot.<sup>1</sup>

Partly shells and partly bullets coming over from our right front and fired at the French. A bullet hit a piece of our roof rafters last night at tea, ricocheted off and went through the table top right in the middle of the tea things. It is very different living at a brigade H.Q. than up in the trenches. (I spoke too soon,

<sup>1</sup> We were not "on" in this fight.



## LETTERS FROM HELLES

they are shelling us now like blazes for some reason. Two have burst within 20 yards and now two more ! What a life !)

*Half an hour later, 5.30 p.m.* I really did speak too soon. I stopped writing to have tea and if they put one shell within 50 yards they put 30.

It has stopped now except for an occasional one.

However, we are used to it and went on with our tea (there's another beast about 50 yards off). I have had a good rest here, plenty of work really, but regular meals and all my nights in bed.

I have made the most of that I can tell you.

How long it will last I can't tell. It is very hot now and you can't get the breeze into these dugouts. We live in our shirt sleeves and never wear a coat.

The new officers from England have felt it very much, and our new drafts have suffered and a lot gone sick. I think it is a good thing we came from Egypt as we really don't notice it.

I hear there are plenty more troops supposed to be coming to these parts and I think our Division will probably be taken out to reorganize in a few weeks.

16/7/15.

I am very well and still in command of the Brigade.

18/7/15

I am still at the old spot in Brigade H.Q.<sup>1</sup> in the nullah, but have had a busy time since I wrote last owing to the quantity of orders that have come in, each time cancelled at the last minute.

<sup>1</sup> Close to Clapham Junction.

## 127TH INFANTRY BRIGADE

Twice we have been ordered to take over a section of the defences and twice I have been put in command of that section and twice we have got well on with the relief and twice it has been cancelled in the middle ; this amongst all kinds of other diversions which I am unable to mention. I am still in command of the Brigade and have not been demoted and do not even blush now when I am addressed as General, altho' it takes a lot of getting used to—in war time.

It really is a funny show. Two old dugouts have been sent here from England to command two battalions. They are ex-regulars at least 55 years of age and covered with ribbons, and I can tell you they stare at me ; one of them asked me yesterday what my regular battalion was ! They both seem quite old gentlemen,<sup>1</sup> but I don't like them getting up and standing when they talk to me, and I give them about a fortnight in this place and then home.

It is an absolute record here the number of Brigadiers, Colonels and other senior ranks who have only been able to stick it from 3 days to about a fortnight, and who have then gone home with shattered nerves. Regulars just as much as Territorials. In our division (12 battalions) there is not one single C.O. now commanding who was at Cairo with us. Three have been killed, 8 have gone home (3 wounded and 5 invalided), and I am the only one left and not with my battalion.

It is a very soothing sight to see these full strength battalions of K.'s army coming in. Some of them are as strong as and can actually relieve the whole

<sup>1</sup> They don't seem so old now and were both very stout fellows.

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

of the trenches held by our Brigade ! We have felt all these two months that there was no one at our backs and that we had to fight it out on our own, and it is very pleasant to feel that we have backing now. They will soon settle down and are excellent troops, but at present a bit jumpy and inclined, as last night, to make night perfectly hideous with sudden rifle fire. However, we sleep through it mostly, unless a C.O. gets the jumps and telephones back (as last night) to the guns close to my H.Q. to open fire. They'll get over that soon. I fancy it is being so very close to old man Turk that worries them at first. Annie and her pups have taken to throwing shells around promiscuously at night, but I fancy the American Ammunition Contractor has done old man Turk down a bit.

The night before last I counted 27 within possibly 300 yards of here and only 5 burst, and last night I got tired of counting and went to sleep. None seemed to be bursting.

The heat is rather bad just now and everybody is finding it trying, altho' I keep very well. It is awfully hot in the nullah, so this afternoon I went up to the 6th Battn. H.Q., which is under a tree and cannot be seen from Achi Baba. I had a nice cool sleep under the tree in the open and feel much refreshed.

One is inclined to get rather jaded at times, but I find if you don't worry and take any time you can spare wandering down to the shore, you soon shake it off. You see we have done over two months now, almost entirely in the fire trenches and always under shell and rifle fire, which you never get away from, with

## 127TH INFANTRY BRIGADE

only one week's proper rest. One longs for a week away from it all. Thank goodness it has no effect on my nerves or on my spirits, which are A1, or on my appetite or sleeping powers. Only one feels jaded at times, naturally.

The evening hate is starting now and the Turks are shelling promiscuously at goodness knows what. It is really quite safe wandering about as long as you keep away from wagons and groups ! At this range you can judge the shell and get down somewhere.

Anyhow everybody does it.

20/7/15.

I got a parcel from you to-day : they are simply ripping and the lemonade fizzes are just what one appreciates in this heat when one can't get a fizzy drink for love or money.

We have moved Brigade H.Q. out of that beastly nullah to a ripping breezy spot under some trees, where we hardly ever get a shell. I had a topping sleep under a tree this afternoon in the open and feel very fit. The change from the nullah has quite taken away my jaded feeling.

I had to go up into the fire trenches this morning to look at some work up there. It was as hot as blazes and smelly and dusty. K.'s army were in possession, very keen but rather ignorant as yet of trench work. We all wear shirt sleeves and it is very funny they generally take me for the adjutant of the 5th Man. (by my helmet. I don't undeceive them, but if by any chance they find out who I am it is very funny

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

the way they apologize. The trenches here are extraordinary, I walked about 5 miles this morning and 4 miles of the trip was entirely underground. It is like a huge warren, but I know every turning in it now, and all the short cuts as well as I know the walks round Parbold.

K.'s army are lost in it absolutely at present and the fire trenches are so intricate, a lot of the officers don't know yet which are Turk and which are their own trenches.

The Asiatic guns are a nuisance, they seem to have got a lot of big new ones and they use them nearly always at night. Last night was very noisy, as they were chucking Jack Johnsons four at a time on to the Peninsula from about 11.30 to 2 a.m. I woke up at first, but went to sleep again very soon and left them at it. No one takes much notice, as long as it is near somebody else.<sup>1</sup>

21/7/15.

It is much cooler to-day and the air is really fresh, very pleasing after the heat we are having.

Two men have turned up here with K.'s army, one a Major Mott whom I used to meet out with the beagles and another Brig.-Gen. Baldwin,<sup>2</sup> who was in the Manchesters and who used to act Brigade Major of our camps years ago.

He remembers me as a 2nd Lieut. and is highly tickled to find me the same rank as himself!

## 127TH INFANTRY BRIGADE

I have just had breakfast with him and Brig.-Gen. Lord Hampden, who now commands one of the Brigades in our Division, at Division. We had to go there for a pow-wow and had a better breakfast than pow-wow, porridge, eggs and bacon, raspberry jam and butter. I mix in most select circles nowadays.

I may go back to the battalion any time, altho' so far there are no signs of it so you had better make the most of it.

We have a ripping Mess here under the trees, and I am afraid we shall have to leave it very soon, probably to-day.

Old man Turk seems to have had a present from Germany yesterday. He is most lighthearted with his shells this morning. Probably he is very pleased at having some that burst and likes watching them, also it is rumoured that he has got a select party of Mudirs and journalists from Constantinople to see how things are going. We hoped the select party were picknicking on Achi Baba yesterday about teatime as some of our guns put about a dozen Jack Johnsons right on the top.

We are all thoroughly prepared for gas here, but it is not a good spot for its use as there is always too much wind, except occasionally at night. If the old man does use it, it will just about be the end of him, as our troops will show him no mercy afterwards and he has not the backbone of the Germans to stand up against active hate, and a bit of hate is just what our men want here. They are too inclined to look on the Turk as a very bad old comic. One old boy came over the parapet one night, probably to give himself up;

<sup>1</sup> This paraphrases the Soldier's Prayer, "O Lord, give us victory but not in our sector."

<sup>2</sup> Killed at the Suvla landing.



## LETTERS FROM HELLES

he was received on the point of a bayonet by one of the 5th Colliers, who thought he might be leading an attack. The old man was not much hurt and our men were so sorry for him they gave him several rum rations and made him most indecently tight.

22/7/15.

We moved up into front trenches yesterday evening and I spent most of the night till 1 a.m. in walking round and finding where everybody had got to. It is unpleasant work walking about at night. You have to walk a good deal in the nullah and the open; you don't get shelled, but bullets come in intermittently the whole time. I suppose the odds are very much against one being hit, but there are quite a lot of casualties all the same.

We are expecting old man Turk to make a devil of a biff against us in the next few days, and shall give him a good hiding.

7.0. Have been very busy all day.

24/7/15.

We are now in a dugout in Krithea Nullah awaiting events! Mr. Turk has apparently got a lot of reinforcements and new guns and is fairly lavish with his ammunition. Our friend Hunter-Weston has been invalided home. Gen. Douglas has taken over the 8th Army Corps *pro tem*.

I am still in office.

Our second draft (small) has arrived, but I don't know any of the officers of the 5th.

## 127TH INFANTRY BRIGADE

I am very well indeed in spite of a very busy 3 or 4 days, getting tons of orders and arrangements cut and dried for eventualities. I walked round our trenches with Ian Hamilton the other day.

We hear that it is thought at home that the Turks may give in any day! I hope so, but we don't believe a word of it. There are no signs of it here anyway. The old man is as lively as ever, altho' he does not hanker after attacking us. If he can be screwed up, he is bound to have a big go at us in the next day or so.

He tried on a mild attack yesterday, but got badly mauled. It is a sight for the Gods to see the 75's really get at him in the open. They keep on him so wonderfully and make everything very comfortable.

It is really extraordinary warfare. When we attack we break in his communication trenches every 100 yards with high explosives, his trenches are blown to blazes and then the infantry are let loose. The guns are then cocked up to deal with the supports coming up and make a big cloud of dust behind, so that his artillery can't see what we are doing and then, as soon as the old man climbs out to run away, the 75's chase him out of sight. It always reminds one of well-trained sheep-dogs rounding up a flock of sheep. It is really quite pretty, but one feels very sorry for the individual altho' absolutely bloodthirsty against the mass, and one feels inclined to shout when one watches it.

A shell has this moment burst within 20 yards of this dugout and covered us all with dust and filth not to mention several more holes in our tarpaulin roof.

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

A pleasant life ! It is just lunch time too and the food will be sandy now as well as fly-blown. There is one complete shell hole in the roof, but it was just before we moved in luckily. I see practically all our wounded officers have been sent home to England. I could do with a week or so myself. It does not seem nearly 3 months since we landed here. I think we all deserve a bit of leave, we have had none for nearly a year, and undoubtedly have borne the brunt of this show bar the actual landing, and that was only a week before we arrived.

I *thought* the publication of our casualties would open people's eyes a bit and they must be nearly double that now.

27/7/15.

I got another parcel from you to-day with a cake in and two pots of salmon, etc. We have had the potted stuff and part of the cake for lunch.

I don't know if it was Aunt Constance's cake, but at any rate it is simply top hole and I hope you will give her my love and thank her very much for me.

You don't know what an enormous difference your parcels make to me. The parkin was simply ripping and the potted meat and tongues and sardines are exactly what we love for lunch. It is so hot at mid-day we can hardly face bully beef !

The café au lait is absolutely priceless, also oxo. I find all the other officers' parcels are so utterly idiotic, full of beef lozenges and fancy things that are invented by shopkeepers to catch the public with.

## 127TH INFANTRY BRIGADE

Sweets and toffee are always prized and a small amount of chocolate. Everybody sends piles of that, and at present no one can eat it, there has been so much sent. Butter and tinned sausages are good.

There are 6 of us in the Brigade Mess and the other members' parcels are negligible, being filled with rubbish mostly. I have not got Jack's cigars yet. Cigars are like gold dust and it is really too hot for a pipe.

W. R. Marshall,<sup>1</sup> a very good soldier, has got the 42nd Division.

6.0 p.m. It is getting bearable now as the sun is going down.

You may like to hear my day.

I did office work till 10 a.m. and then went to test a new bomb with the R.E. Had a meeting of C.O.s at 11 to talk over a possible attack scheme.<sup>2</sup> Wrote orders and chits nearly all afternoon and after I have finished this I am going round the trenches. At present the evening hate is on so I am better here. They have already put shrapnel on this dugout twice within the last half-hour.

*Re* cakes, the only suggestion I can make is, *don't* make them rich. Parkin, *seed cake*, sponge cake, lunch cake and shortbread are the best. They always arrive in good condition and you need not make them very wet if you put them in a tin.

I am very well and the life suits me, altho' the heat is trying, but I don't feel it like some of the

<sup>1</sup> Major-General W. R. Marshall, afterwards commanding in Mesopotamia.

<sup>2</sup> Our attack of August 6th to cover the landing at Suvla Bay.

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

others do. A fortnight's rest, out of range of Annie and her pups, Quick Dick and various other guns, is what we all could do with, altho' we can do without it and most certainly shan't get it!

I got the lined Burberry, thank you, and it will be invaluable when the rains start. At present it makes a most comfortable pillow.

I don't fancy my films are doing much good in this weather, so I am going to send them to you and chance them getting through.

We are getting some nice crosses for our officers' graves made of wood and are getting some photos taken of them.

We go up to the firing line again very soon and shall have to get the Turk sniper down again. He has quite got the better of K.'s army, but of course they are new at the job. It will take us 2 or 3 days.

I must go off now as the hate seems to have died down for the moment, at any rate just here.

28/7/15. 6.45 p.m. I have to-day packed and sent off my films to date.

There is a general post on here to-day and to-morrow and our H.Q. are back, for to-night only, in our nice cool dugouts under the trees.

Since we were here last the Turks have taken to shelling the place, which really does not make much difference.

They gave us a good shelling<sup>1</sup> this afternoon, but

<sup>1</sup> A shell partially buried one of the 6th Manchester signallers, but his astonished face was sucking well out of the debris. His companion ran away. By the time I arrived at the spot the companion was back with a spade and a camera. The camera was used first.

## 127TH INFANTRY BRIGADE

no damage, and they put one big one right in the middle of the horses in a little wood just behind us.

I have been all round to-day as usual.

Some of my photos may just be a landscape or may show Achi Baba in the distance more or less hidden by dust and bursting shells. I am afraid it was too far off for the photos to come out, but I took 2 or 3 on the off chance during the terrific bombardment prior to one of our attacks. In the same roll is one of several officers looking at the bombardment through glasses.

The evening hate has just started, so I have moved my seat, a box with a blanket on, up against the wall of the dugout nearest old man Turk. It is difficult to know what you like to hear in my letters, one day very much resembles another, especially when you are at Brigade and don't have to live in the fire trenches. One writes and chats about a 1,000 and 1 matters of varying importance and futility and goes round one's battalions and looks at work going on and attends pow-wows.

The only excitement is the ubiquitous shell and when you get into a zone on your walks that is being shelled, you dive into the nearest dugout and sit tight—or take no notice occasionally when in a hurry. After all the chances are very much against getting bagged by promiscuous shelling.

29/7/15. 9.15 a.m.

We move again to-day as the Brigade is taking over the fire trenches.



## LETTERS FROM HELLES

We have been sitting around here now for a week expecting a heavy Turk attack, but it has not come off yet and I don't think it will now.

Our intelligence (there's a sudden shell nearly on our dugout) warned us of an attack and we are very disappointed it has not come off. I fancy the Germans have rather a difficulty in getting old man Turk to face us. Intelligence said it was a certainty, and it is very sickening as we (the misprint was caused by my ducking at a shell that did not burst) should have given them a good handling. There's 3 more. It's a lively spot and I am now writing squatting right under the wall of our dugout. There's another! I won't put in any more as it reads rather theatrically, but the old man is fairly out for our blood this morning—2 more, I have climbed off my box and am now sitting in an undignified position on the floor, but they are good shells and much too near to be pleasant, the best one was within 15 yards. I shall give up counting. they seem annoyed with us this morning and are fairly letting us have it. I got another parcel from you last night, thank you. Tongue, cake and sardines, also John's cigars.

1.30 p.m. We had the most unmerciful shelling all this morning for no reason that we know of. No damage done.

1/8/15.

I have been very busy these last two days as Gen. Lawrence has been sent back and I have been handing over, etc., etc. He had finished his other job, so I am no longer a Brig.-Gen.

## 127TH INFANTRY BRIGADE

We are all very glad to get him back again. I rejoin the Battn. up in the trenches to-morrow.

Gen. Lawrence seems to think he may be recalled, and the funny part is, if he is, one of the dugout C.O.s is my senior, so if Gen. Lawrence goes, the Brigade will be handed over to him. It is a funny war. I am very well and have been all round the trenches these last 2 days. The Bombers (Turk) had quite got the better of K.'s army and killed several, but we have already got the old man back in his place again.

## VI.—BATTLE OF 6<sup>7</sup>TH AUGUST AT HELLES

3/8/15.

I am still very well. It seems funny to be so close to the 12th, but I fancy I shall be celebrating it in another way this time with old man Turk doing the grouse act.

We had a funny celebration two or three days ago when we heard of the Bagdad victory. A *feu de joie* was arranged for 5 p.m. Everything was very hot and quiet just before time and then suddenly the rip started up with the French and ran right along the fire trenches until brought up by the Ægean sea. It sounded like someone tearing an enormous piece of canvas right across the Peninsula. Old man Turk woke up out of his dose and continued the *feu de joie* with every rifle and machine-gun he possessed for about 20 minutes, much to the amusement of our men, who sat in their trenches and roared. I expect the Turk thinks we are quite mad.

You keep talking of our going to Egypt! I don't see any chance. If we were to finish off here this Autumn, and I don't see why not, it would not surprise me if the 29th and 42nd Divisions were sent back to England to fill up and reorganize and rest before going to France.

This is only my idea, but after all, we have done the

## BATTLE OF 6<sup>7</sup>TH AUGUST AT HELLES

worst part of the job and shall have had a combination of unpleasant circumstances which would be hard to beat.

Aug. 5th.

I have been very busy all day and shall post to-night. If you don't get a letter from me for the next few days don't be surprised!

I am very well again.

Sunday, 8/8/15.

When I last wrote I said you might not hear from me for a day or two as I had orders for a show.

The 29th Div. had been ordered to attack a Turk trench to our left and we (5th Man.) had to attack 2 trenches to join up, probably the most awkward 2 trenches on the Peninsula.

So on Friday, after an artillery preparation the Worcesters<sup>1</sup> and 250 of our men went over the parapet.

The attack failed and was wiped out owing to our bombardment having been useless, the Turk shrapnel, and the fact that their trenches were bulging with Turks. The Worcesters lost about 800 out of 950, and we lost about 200 out of 250. Yesterday we were ordered to attack again after another artillery preparation which was not very successful, in conjunction with the rest of our Brigade and the Fusilier Brigade. The Fusiliers<sup>2</sup> took their trenches, which

<sup>1</sup> 4th Worcestershire Regiment.

<sup>2</sup> Lancashire Fusiliers (Territorials).

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

were fairly straightforward, but our Brigade never arrived, the attack was pretty well wiped out, although luckily there were a good many men kept out of the attack.

Our Brigade losses were about 700 and we have about 700 effectives left. Thirteen officers were outed in my battalion. I am afraid C. Ainscough is killed, he is missing, and one of our wounded who crawled in last night says he is dead.

Jack Sanders was slightly wounded, a scratch on the arm which is already healed. He got it from a piece of shell that came into our dugout. The Turk shelling was tremendous and was largely concentrated on our trenches, especially the trench our H.Q. are in. How we lived comfortably the two days I can't imagine, but one escapes in an extraordinary way. We got heavily shelled by our own guns by mistake, who killed and wounded some of the men, which does not help an attack altogether.

However, I am still very well and unhit, altho' it sounds selfish to say so. Our casualties during the 2 days as far as I can tell were about 240, so we are down to a low ebb again, especially in officers.

Poor Cyril only arrived back the day before he was killed (from hospital).

I don't think you know any of the other officers, some K.'s attached and the rest our new draft. Winterbottom was killed.<sup>1</sup> Young Allen rejoined to-day and has already been slightly wounded in the leg. So has Bryham, but neither are bad enough even to go to hospital. The attack was costly, but it

<sup>1</sup> Officer casualties : 9 killed, 3 wounded.

## BATTLE OF 6/7TH AUGUST AT HELLES

succeeded in its object, viz., keeping the best Turk troops here whilst other operations went on elsewhere !!

We are still in the fire trenches. Division ordered another attack for last night, but it never came off as the Brigade had been so badly handled the men were not fit for it.

*10th Aug./15. 5.15.*

We are just back in the redoubt line from the fire trenches and are glad to get back after 5 days there and two days' severe fighting. Both officers and men are pretty well done up and want a rest, such as it is. Yesterday we had what is called a "combined hate," our machine-guns and snipers and the gunner officer in charge of 3 trench mortars, a most infernal machine which throws an enormous bomb of 100 lbs. full of high explosive. The Turks have a trench in the nullah which we enfilade and which is below us only we can't get at them because it is very cleverly and heavily traversed.

The trench we wanted to strafe is called G11.H. The mortars' first bomb burst on the trench end nearest to us and all the Turks ran up to the other end. We then burst one in the far end and back they came. Then we put several right in the middle parts, blowing several Turks sky high. Of course this took some time, as we had to shepherd them a bit by heading them off when they tried to bolt. We blew in their communication trenches and also all their traverses and then of course they were like rats in a trap. As soon as the traverses were down we turned on our snipers



## LETTERS FROM HELLES

and our machine guns and strafed them until they came out into the open and ran like rabbits. We then chased them into the nullah and bombed that. The trouble was it fetched the Turk artillery on to our trenches at once and we had the most unholy shelling all day.

The trench mortars were buried at mid-day by a shell from Annie and Co. We knocked off for a bit. We started again later on and were promptly knocked out again, so had to stop permanently.

However, the mortars are being moved to-day. They were not pleasant neighbours, as old man Turk could not find them. At any rate he must have used about 300 shells and our total casualties (our men unfortunately) were, 2 killed, 4 wounded. We blew G.I.H. to smithereens and must have bagged a fair number of Turks.

We have got their best troops (Adrianople)<sup>1</sup> against us here and they are extraordinarily plucky. Time after time they came back and tried to repair the damage and got killed and bombed out. Then last night we got rifles fixed on the trench to stop them working at night but they had built two traverses by this morning in spite of it. However, it really was a good hate and must have annoyed the old man and the Turk H.Q., too, judging by the amount of shells the gunners were allowed to shoot at us and they *must be short* (altho' you would not have thought so on Aug. 6th and 7th. I never imagined such a shelling as we got). I think we must arrange another hate with O.C. Mortars for August 12th, if we are up

<sup>1</sup> A piece of Intelligence I am unable to verify.

## BATTLE OF 6 7TH AUGUST AT HELLES

there again by then. Our men enjoyed it thoroughly. It reminded me of ferreting the steep places down the streams at Slaidburn—bar the shelling!

12/8/15. 3.30 p.m.

There is a big hate going on now by the French guns ably assisted by our big ones. They chucked hundreds of the most appalling Johnsons on to the Turk trenches away on our right. It is the most extraordinary sight and how old man Turk sticks it I can't imagine. Our guns had 3 ten minute hates during last night to tie the Turks down here, but they did not even wake me up! I was very tired and slept like a log. I spent a good deal of the nights after our attacks up in the fire trenches, as we had been warned to stand by for a Turk counter attack. We are told now that the Turk had arranged to attack us on the night of Aug. 6th, so his trenches were all double manned and that is why our attacks were wiped out. I am very well and quite rested again and Sanders and I think of going up to-morrow to the fire trenches to celebrate the 12th by sniping a Turk or so with *periscopic* rifles. I don't think we shall be sent over the parapet again for some time now unless the necessity arises as our Brigade is now at the point where we *must* do some reorganization.

We were not shelled yesterday or to-day except for a few odd ones. It makes us wonder if the old man has taken away some of his guns elsewhere.

## MORE TRENCH LIFE

Mohammedan festival at the end of Ramadan, so it cuts both ways.

The Division is being relieved to-day, I am glad to say by the Scotties (52),<sup>1</sup> and we go back to bivouac and a much needed rest, after a pretty bad week up here.

We hear now for certain that the Turk was about to attack us on the evening of the 6th and that explains why his trenches were all double manned and why our attacks were so badly handled on the 6th and 7th. That's a near shell! Also in spite of all our attacks, except on the vineyard trenches, failing, we did what was required, that is, kept his best (Adrianople) troops here whilst the landing elsewhere was brought off.

It was costly for us, but I suppose worth it, and someone had to suffer against this stone wall.

I went up to the fir wood near here yesterday with my glasses to have a look at the battlefield, and it is a sight, our Brigade and the Worcesters' dead are lying about in whole platoons and there are heaps of Turk dead too.

The dead can't be touched even if only just over the parapet, the trenches are so close together you could not put a finger up.

They are shelling these trenches again now: I hope it will be over by the time breakfast is ready, and I'm quite ready for that.

I think we are only a side show here now, and I had hoped for a quiet time; but the side show, so far, has been the hottest time I've had since I landed.

<sup>1</sup> 52nd Division.

## VII.—MORE TRENCH LIFE

13/8/15.

I am waiting for breakfast, fried eggs and bacon, fried toast, bread and jam and no butter. I *should* like a lump of hard cold butter. We had a most restful day yesterday up to a point, very little rifle fire and only an odd shell now and then. Suddenly at 7 p.m. old man Turk started a hate, he turned on about 2 batteries firing as hard as they could and all his rifles in G.

We got a pretty fair shelling, as he is quite a conjurer with his field guns and serves them very rapidly. We are in the Redoubt line and in Brigade reserve, altho' only about 600 yards from the Turk trenches, so we had our dinner at 8 as usual, when the flies had died down. It was pretty noisy as our guns had chipped in by then. The old man then proceeded to attack some Turk trenches we captured last week in the vineyard, but got the knock.

He stopped his guns about 9 p.m., but the rifle fire went on all night.

We all got ready for a quick move, then went to sleep.

I slept all night pretty well and things are quieter this morning except for an occasional shell. This is how he celebrated the 12th for us, altho' it is also a

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

There's no doubt about it, the troops opposite us now are magnificent fighters and very brave. However, I hope we shall mop up this place fairly shortly, as we have had quite a good deal stuffed into 3 months, and of course on this narrow frontage you must be in every show even if you are in rest dugouts! We all could do with a week or two of peace. Some of our old nerveless veterans are feeling the strain and duck at shells. I always did and always shall.

I have finished breakfast, quite good, too. We had it without a shell after all. It is most awfully hot to-day, and I am sitting in my shirt sleeves, no vest nowadays, and perspiring. The wind will, I hope, get up soon and make it better.

It is very kind of Mr. Hirst<sup>1</sup> to send cigarettes for the men, but they have not turned up yet. They are priceless here, and if you can get any more for the battalion, send as many along as you can get given you. The issue is very small and the men deserve them if ever men did. It's one thing they are short of, also sweets, which they love.

Since the last sentence the Turks have tried again for the vineyard but were rebuffed. I watched them with great interest running back shepherded by our shrapnel.

It did not seem much of an attack.

I am very well.

P.S.—The only officers of the old lot who have not been on some list as killed, wounded or sick are Self, Ernest Fletcher, Cronshaw, Cunningham and Lund.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> T. J. Hirst of Meltham Hall, Huddersfield, my father-in-law.

<sup>2</sup> Lieut. Lund.

## MORE TRENCH LIFE

Out of the two drafts and K.'s army attached there is only one left.

14/8/15.

We are relieved at last (yesterday) and are right back within 50 yards of the sea, simply ripping, you can stroll about and we have not been shelled so far.

I had a ripping bathe before breakfast off a lighter into deep water and such lovely warm water too, and now (3 p.m.) I am lying out on my valise in the sun, it is quite cool as there is a cool breeze off the sea. I feel very fit and the change down here has bucked us all up.

There is no news.

18/8/15.

I am very well and we are still back resting. My only drawback is an inevitable one, one's skin here cuts very easily, and if you knock your hand you get a sore place, which takes a long time to heal. I have 3 now! but I get them properly dressed every day, so it does not matter. I am very fit and find that a dose of salts about every 10 days keeps me all right.

Gen. Lawrence, when he saw I had what we used to call veldt sores in Africa, was keen that I should go on a Hospital ship for a week or so for a rest, but I am so well I refused.

Sanders has gone for a bit of a rest on to a Hospital ship. He got bronchitis and was threatened with



## LETTERS FROM HELLES

ever, so I got him sacked straight off. It is very extraordinary that I should be one of the 4 survivors of the originals, who have not been on any list, but I take great care of myself. It is quite easy to get to Alexandria if you are a bit seedy and they say very difficult to get back. Talbot Woods (Staff Captain) is there now. Cronshaw and Cunningham are both seedy to-day.

I have had my first inoculation against cholera, altho' there is none on the Peninsular. In fact the health of the troops is extraordinary.

I am glad to hear all the Turks have been inoculated against cholera, too.

If anybody wants to send anything they can send cigars, I don't care what sort or how cheap. They are invaluable and more appreciated than anything.

There is nothing doing here and we are having quite a good rest and very occasional shells. I think you had better send me some thicker underclothing now, in case we are here for winter. I also want a clothes line and a pair of long rubber boots and 4 pairs of arctic socks.

I don't want felt-lined boots as *you can't dry them*.

One must prepare for the winter in case the show goes on. Personally I am afraid it will, altho' the next few weeks will decide, as things are moving, altho' slowly.

I have been sitting on the cliffs this afternoon watching a Turk Howitzer from behind Achi Baba shell Gully Beach about half a mile away.

It was extraordinarily good shooting, the cliff is nearly perpendicular and the beach only about 40

## MORE TRENCH LIFE

yards wide and they were dropping them just between the beach and sea, mostly into the water.

The beach was crowded and probably 50 men were bathing, but no one was hit and the bathers did not even trouble to come out of the water.<sup>1</sup> We are all pretty used to it here, but personally the first shell sends me to cover, or more often the first four, as they generally send down 4 at a time.

My writing is bad as my hands have just been dressed. I have 3 dressings on and am wrapped around with that stuff we stick creepers up with, also iodine on raw places is uncomfortable. However, I don't care. They are very small sores and will go in a week or so with luck.

We are all like Lazarus on this Peninsular. Gen. Douglas inspected us yesterday and as usual kept saying, "They are fine men, Darlington, and I should like to see them get into the Turks." He spoke to several and one conversation tickled him immensely and did for me altogether.

Gen. D. : "Have you ever bayoneted a Turk?"

Ruffian : "Yes, Sir."

Gen. D. : "Did he stay in the trench?"

R. "He *did* that! He were half-dead and I thowt I'd best finish him."

I think Gen. D. always had suspicions that our men are ruffians and don't take many prisoners. He roared and said something about one's duty to take prisoners, but as he could hardly speak, it had not the desired effect.

<sup>1</sup> On hearing the screech of a shell the bathers to a man disappeared under water, and no doubt felt very safe

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

20/8/15.

We are again up in the fire trenches and came in on a sudden order to relieve "somebody else"! It is a new spot and the best we have been in yet, bar the extreme proximity of old man Turk, whose trenches are only 30 yards away and in some places closer.

We are right up "farthest North" due West of Krithia with our left flank on the sea shore, where we have a barricade. The 6th and 5th are working together as we are so small and we share a H.Q. in a ravine which runs from the top of the cliffs very steeply to the sea. It is a ripping place, our dugouts are cut out in the side of the ravine with steps up and down. My dugout and our dining-room (with table) are on a sort of terrace right over the sea and as I write I can see the shore and the sea and the sun beginning to go down behind Imbros.

It is safe from shells, too, as the ravine is so steep, altho' they plaster the opposite bank of it now and then with shrapnel. The large trench mortars are holding a private hate again near here with the usual beastly results. Already both the 6th and ourselves have had casualties from shells; they are trying to find Syers<sup>1</sup> and his mortars. He is a tophole chap, but I wish he would not follow us about. He has just fired one of his beastly mortars again, and the Turk guns are at it, too.

The Turk does not seem to have as many guns as he had, but he does enough damage with these. I

<sup>1</sup> Capt. Syers, officer i/c Trench Mortars.

## MORE TRENCH LIFE

hear several of our men have been hit up in the fire trench. The evenings are getting cool again and I am quite glad to put a woolly on now and my lined Burberry a bit later.

It is very pleasant like this, but will soon get cold enough for anyone.

Sanders is not back yet and I have not heard from him lately.

Gen. Lawrence has gone again on another job and the Brigade is being taken charge of by an ex-regular, who is senior in the Brigade and who commands the ——. He is a very nice old gentleman. General — is exercising supervision over the whole firing line! so you can see how fatuous the whole position is.

Our little Willie would rather do that than have what he calls "a civilian" commanding the Brigade.

It is very pleasant to sit here and watch the cruiser and a destroyer taking on the Turk guns who try to hit the snips, without much success, at intervals during the day. It is very pleasant too to look at the shore and the sea, but it is annoying to be so near and yet so far from the most lovely looking sands and the clearest of clear seas; you can't set a foot on the shore and you therefore can't bathe. The Turk snipers see to that with the utmost precision. It annoys us greatly as we simply revel in the bathe before breakfast down in the bivouac, altho' there the water is rather spoilt by so many people and horses living along the cliffs and throwing all their refuse into the sea.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The refuse in this tideless sea made a disgusting fringe round the shore.

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

My hands are no better and no worse and I am exceedingly fit.

The mails, &c., have been hung up owing to troop movements, but I did get to-day 4 parcels which were greeted with shouts from about 5 or 6 staff and gave us an excellent lunch when we had nothing to eat but bread and jam!

21st. 10 a.m.

I will write you before I go round the fire trenches. It is a perfect morning and I'd give anything to be able to go and bathe. The worst of it is there is no water<sup>1</sup> at all up here and we have to bring every drop up in fanatis on mules. It comes nearly 2 miles. You can't even have a decent wash, only a rub in a cupful at the bottom of a bucket.

Old man Turk has been very quiet since we came and has not thrown a single bomb, altho' the people we relieved said he was very energetic and threw bombs all day and night. The things I hate are his little mountain guns which he suddenly opens with, and which are exceedingly dangerous if you are moving about. We had a very good dinner last night, soup, stew (fresh meat, onions and potatoes, your plum pudding with cold cream sauce well whipped up with brandy, whiskey and coffee.

When you send sausages, which we revel in, send several tins or at any rate enough for one breakfast for 4 people!

I am not at all concerned about Russia, she is

<sup>1</sup> The Navy supplied us with water.

## MORE TRENCH LIFE

playing the game which suits her best, altho' it is forced on her and I don't consider Germany *has* achieved her object. Warsaw is only a lump of brick and mortar, except perhaps as regards neutrals. After all even neutrals are not damned fools and so long as Germany does not destroy the Russian armies, she must lose in the end, altho' I am afraid it will be a long job.

Do you imagine it ever enters our heads here that the Turks are going to lick us, good fighters as they are, and I suppose it is the same in France.

We are bound to win, altho' it may take a year or two. I am talking from the military point of view. I know nothing about the financial side and don't believe anyone else does.

I am afraid you are all pessimists in England, and I believe a short course of brother Turk at close range would cheer you all up considerably.

Everyone who writes to us from England, bar you, writes dismally, whereas you never hear a dismal word of any sort on this Peninsular. If we can't kill them outright we can wear them down in time and that's what is going to happen. There is always the chance of clearing things up here suddenly, but I don't think there is in France.

I went this morning up to a trench about 650 yards behind our firing line and about 700 yards from our old friend<sup>1</sup> in order to look for a place for a M.G. on the top of a bluff. I could not see down the slope, so I very carefully crawled over the parapet and went on my stomach in the furze bushes, just like medium-

<sup>1</sup> The Turk.



## LETTERS FROM HELLES

sized heather. I looked over and was back in the trench within 15 seconds, but some old devil found time to get 3 in at me before I dropped in. I shan't try it again! They are tophole snipers and very watchful. He was much too quick and close to be pleasant. Old Brute; but one can't help respecting them and nearly liking them, they play so fair at any rate on this Peninsular.

There is a very heavy and distant gunning going on the whole time as I write, so I suppose they are hard at it "elsewhere."<sup>1</sup> I am very glad to be a side show for a time.

23/8/15.

We came out of the fire trenches up on Fusilier Bluff yesterday and are now back in Border Ravine for our three days out (in Brigade Reserve). It is a very nice place running down to the sea, only very dusty. We are joining our Mess just at present with the 6th. You can bathe here altho' it is very stoney, and I bathed at 7 this morning. You can't go out more than 4 or 5 yards or you come into view of the Turk trenches, so it is impossible to get a good swim.

Sanders I hear has gone to Alexandria or Malta on a Hospital ship, so we shan't see him back for some weeks. F. James has been acting adjutant since he came back from hospital, but I have had to send him to command D. Company as Arthur Bryham is now ill and has to go to hospital and we shan't see him

<sup>1</sup> Suvla Bay. The attack on Scimitar Hill and Hill 60, with the Anzac co-operation.

## MORE TRENCH LIFE

again for weeks. So I have no adjutant at all. The Coys. are now as follows:—A, 2nd Lt. E. J. Burrows. B, Capt. J. H. Allen (9th Lincolns), Lt. G. Allen. C, Major A. E. Cronshaw. D, Capt. F. James. M.G. Lieut. Lund. *Battalion H.Q.*, Self, Major E. Fletcher, Capt. H. H. B. Cunningham, R.A.M.C., 2nd Lieut. Taylor, Q.M.

A draft turned up yesterday of 118 with two 2nd Lieuts., so that's our full complement.

Somehow drafts seem mere bullet food nowadays after our experience here. There is not a single officer left of the first 2 drafts and 2 only are alive (wounded) so far as we know and over 500 of the men are killed, wounded or missing. There is no doubt that up to now a man has very little chance of coming through, and the Coy. Officer still less.

I am very well and enjoying the 3 days out.

It is a lovely spot up in these cliff fire trenches, but you are too close to the Turks (30 yards only between trenches) and there is a lot of bombing goes on, not to mention grenades fired by a rifle, which the old man fires promiscuously into our trenches. They do very little harm, but are wearisome after about 3 days.

My hands are better a bit, one sore has healed up, but the other two go on for ever. I think the sea-bathing does them good, but they are a beastly nuisance. I catch them on everything and can't get things out of my trouser pockets! However, I am extremely fit in spite of my age!!

It's getting on for 4 months now since we landed and I suppose taking things generally it has been one of the stiffest campaigns there has ever been. However,

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

we keep going and are quite happy when we can get a bathe before breakfast and the food is A1, including parcels of course.

Anyway, the Turk seems a Gent, which is a good deal, altho' much too good a bomber for complete comfort. We have a bombing school<sup>1</sup> now away back, and the pupils after a few days, complete their education by coming up to the barricades in the fire trenches and practising on poor old man Turk, under an instructor!! I fancy old man Turk will complete their education and everything else for them. He knows a bit about it himself.

You may get me home stollenbosched at any moment, and bar leaving the 5th I really should not care, altho' I want to have one look at the other side of Achi Baba before I leave this place. Our last draft look a real good lot of pit rats, but not much smartness about them. Of course, it is hard to judge that. I inspected them last night during hate time at the bottom of the ravine. A few shells pitched up on the top, but it was a fairly safe place bar an accident.

One does not notice shells at all now unless they come close and some of the recruits were very surprised when the Sgt.-Major told them to stand still and look to their front.

Syers of the Demoiselles (Big Trench Mortars) was also holding a hate about 400 yards or so away, so there *was* a bit of noise now and then, as the Turk guns were of course searching for him! He's a hardy mariner all right. One gets a friendly feeling for the

<sup>1</sup> C.O. Lt.-Col. A. E. F. Fawcus, D.S.O., M.C., 7th Manchester Regt.

## MORE TRENCH LIFE

Navy up here. The destroyer *Scorpion* patrols our left flank and generally looks after us.

She lights up the ground in front of us at night with her searchlight and pounds the Turk trenches now and then to keep them amused. We keep in touch with her by signal, so she fires at anything we want pounding. She comes in very close now and then, and the old man can't resist turning his guns on her. I fancy she has orders to try and make him waste ammunition.<sup>1</sup> He's probably pretty short nowadays.

I don't know a bit how things are going up north,<sup>2</sup> so can't defy the Censor, but I can't help feeling, taking all things into consideration, that it's about an even chance of the old man collapsing suddenly.

He's had a rough time, is probably short of ammunition and when he does cave in will go to pieces utterly. However, he has surprised us considerably several times before, but I think anyhow it's even money, *if* we have enough troops up there. That of course I can't tell.

The evening hate has just commenced. First shell 6.35 p.m.

26/8/15.

Here we are back again in the firing line. We have got the sector next but one to the sea held by the 6th last time we were here, so we have all the unpleasant

<sup>1</sup> Wishing to draw the fire of a Turk battery in order to locate it, *Scorpion* drifted slowly in towards the shore with a party on deck doing physical jerks in white duck. The oracle worked and I never saw a squad dismiss quicker.

<sup>2</sup> At Suvla and Anzac.

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

mess of very close Turks, bombs and rifle grenades. The weather is gradually changing and during the last day or two we have had lovely cloudy weather, coldish at nights, a gale from Asia which made life beastly for two days with clouds of filthy dust and a few spots of rain.

We are wondering whether the old man is gradually thinning out here. So last night I arranged a strafe to try and draw him. I allowed very little sniping up to 10 p.m. and then at 10 I blew loudly on my whistle and the whole of my line, with fixed bayonets, which glinted in the moonlight, gave the old man 2 rounds rapid. It drew him all right, very quickly, and we judged frightened the life out of him, as we so rarely do it. He opened on us with rifle fire, which we judged pretty thin, and also with 2 M.G.s, which was a grave error on his part, as I was able to locate their direction and may find their emplacements to-day. He will very likely move them now, but it won't do any harm to get our guns, assisted by our old friend the *Scorpion* to knock his emplacements to blazes. It will cheer him up and probably add to the bag. Old Cronshaw got a bump on the head during our strafe last night, but no damage done. I think it was a bit of stone off the parapet, as the M.G. knocked our sandbags to pieces just where he and I were standing. He is a perfect marvel and is doing the most excellent work. I only hope the old Turk won't bag him. On Aug. 7th he climbed out of our trench in the attempted attack on H. 11B. and was promptly blown in again by a shell! It did not seem to worry him at all and all he suffered

## MORE TRENCH LIFE

from was a bit of stiffness. We pull his leg about it, as you can imagine.

I am very well and my two veldt sores are slowly healing, altho' they are very sore and I still have my hands bandaged, which is a nuisance.

I think I told you that Bryham had gone to hospital, sick, and I had to send F. James to command D. Co., so I have no adjutant now. However, Ernest Fletcher and I do the work between us. I hear Brig.-Gen. Baldwin is killed up North, but I hope it is not true. (It is.) I told you about him before and also Gen. Lawrence is coming back to the Brigade, which is tophole news. At present we have no brigade commander as ——— seems to rely on me if anything crops up outside his usual routine of more or less brackish chits.

27th.

Gen. Lawrence is back and Gen. Baldwin is dead, I am sorry to hear. I was up in the fire trenches yesterday and saw quite a bevy of Turks digging about 300 yards away and getting out of cover in the most impudent manner! The position of affairs there is curious. I took the trench over two days ago, and it has no loopholes whatever, the Turk trench is about 25 yards away and he has some first-class snipers there very well hidden.

The result is he is absolutely top dog and we could not even use periscopes, but had to use small pieces of looking-glass at the back of the trench, and if you move one of these it is broken immediately.



## LETTERS FROM HELLES

It is, of course, certain death to peep over, so we were quite impotent to deal with the brazen diggers, as they could only be seen from this particular bit of trench, about 10 yards long. I got hold of the forward observing artillery officers and showed them the digging parties and they telephoned the batteries; one Major said his battery was not on duty and would not fire, and the other Major consented, after I had got tired of hanging around, to fire 2 rounds, which certainly did discourage the diggers to some extent. I then got hold of one of the gunner subs (Lee), and we concocted a message to the Destroyer which we signalled off. She said she could not see the target, so she failed us, too. The funny part is I believe the sub with whom I was trying to arrange the strafe was Violet Ingham's brother.<sup>1</sup>

In the middle of all this James went and stuck up his periscope. I had just opened my mouth to strafe him, but the Turk was quicker with his rifle than I was with my tongue. He smashed the top glass to pieces and I got 3 pieces as a reminder, none of them luckily did any damage, but I got one on the cheek, one on the arm and one on the knee, which stung most abominably. There *are* limits and we can't snipe back, so I determined to teach the Turk to mind his own business. Cronshaw, Lee and I got a rifle and rifle grenades and two of our men, and between us, none of us knowing in the least how to use the beastly thing, we loosed off some grenades. By sheer fluking, we got our second and third bombs right bang in the Turk trench, apparently clean in the lair of the sniper.

<sup>1</sup> See note p. 110.

## MORE TRENCH LIFE

We trust we blew him up, but at any rate the sniping there is not so confident as it was, as we followed it up with a shower of bombs from the small trench mortars. You have to keep the old man under and chastise him when he is naughty. I am now making loopholes in order to teach the diggers discretion.

We go down to Y Ravine again to-morrow for our 3 days, and shall get some bathing, thank goodness.

Yesterday and to-day we have had our first days of cold since we left England, altho' it is hot again now (2.45 p.m.), and probably you would have been very hot when I was wearing a woolly and lined mackintosh.

It rained, too, last night, the third rain shower I have seen since we left Alexandria!

I did not get much wet and slept very well through it.

I think it is as well to assume we are here for a winter campaign, so you can act accordingly in sending the things.

28/8/15. 7.10 p.m.

I will write a line before dinner. We are back again in Y Ravine, Ghurka Bluff, for our 3 days' easy.

We were relieved this afternoon and just as I was coming down the communication trench to tea, I got a frantic message from Brigade to say that the 8th Corps reported that there was great activity in the Turk trenches opposite us, that they had cut through their parapets and were removing their barbed wire, and would I at once send an officer up

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

to observe and report and that the forward observing officer had reported it to the Corps and *that all batteries had been informed!!*

As I had been in the trenches for 3 days, I merely thirsted for the blood of the Artillery Officer.

However, duty called so I gave up all ideas of tea and went up to see these frolickings for myself.

I got hold of the artillery officer, whom I found to be an elderly subaltern of a pessimistic turn of mind, and told him to show me the activities at once.

I looked very hard, but could not see anything dangerous or unusual, and I am thoroughly glad to say old man Turk smashed the pessimist's expensive telescopic periscope to atoms the first shot, altho' I got a nasty drive of powdered glass all over my face, for the second day running. I then met Gen. Lawrence hurrying up and he seemed quite relieved when I told him it was all rot, so he went home.

The next arrival was Lee,<sup>1</sup> very hot and with orders to range on the gaps! He is V. Ingham's brother. It's curious we should be in the same sector and arranging combined strafes together.

29th. 6.45 a.m.

I am now writing before I get up to have a swim. It has been quite a chilly night, but I have had some hot tea and a cigarette and shall go and plunge into the sea very soon. I say "plunge," but if you go out into deeper water than about 3 feet, you get sniped

<sup>1</sup> Lieut. Lee, R.A., afterwards killed, a brother of Mrs. Lister Ingham of Wighill Park, Tadcaster.

## MORE TRENCH LIFE

at once. I have been thinking you had better send me out at once some kind of a small bivouac tent. The wet weather will be here in another month and R.E. stores are like all other necessities, bar food, in this campaign—there are none.

It wants to be just big enough for me to sleep in and quite low and it must be waterproof and strong, not gimcrack because of the gales. It will have to be put up in dugouts, on cliffs, &c., so that is why it must not be too big.

The fresh butter arrived very well and we simply revel in it. In fact we could eat 2 lbs. a week with gusto!! We all miss butter very much. Toffee is a very good thing to send and *do* send some seed-cakes.

By the way let people know when writing *NOT* to put 127 Brigade, 42 Div., on the envelope. 1/5 Manchester, Med. Exp. Force, is enough and anything more is forbidden and merely attracts the Censor's eye.

31 8 15.

My writing will be curious as my hand is tied up again.

My sores healed up two days ago and I took the bandages off, but they promptly started again, especially my right thumb. However, it is much better to-day as I am having hot fomentations on. I am very fit indeed otherwise. I had my second cholera inoculation, but it has no effect on anybody except a stiff arm for a short time.

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

We are going up to the fire trenches to-day for 2 days, and then the whole Brigade is going back on to Gully Beach for a week or so of rest.

I had a lovely bathe this morning, the water was perfectly calm and as clear as crystal.

1/9/15.

We are up again in the fire trenches and have been warned to expect a general attack in the next day or two.

The weather is gradually altering, yesterday was blazing hot, but this morning it was quite cold and I wore my lined Burberry and a woolly till 9 o'clock and even now I have got a tunic on.

We are in the fire trench that runs from Fusilier Bluff to the sea again, so if the Turks attack and break in our line further South we shall be in the soup! The last draft from the home battalion are quite a good stamp of man with a few notable exceptions, but the difference between them and our old hands in looks, bearing, smartness and soldierly qualities is very marked. It makes us realize more than we had ever done before what a fine battalion<sup>1</sup> we brought into this God-forsaken place. Of course, we realize that the officers who joined after the war are in many cases good officers, but you can't turn civilians into good

<sup>1</sup> Our old hands are quite undefeatable. Whilst in the front line one moonlight night by myself, a jackal in no-man's land started howling to the moon. It was the only time I have really felt the hair on my scalp rise and stand up. I moved down the trench for company and found one of my old sweats on sentry go lounging on the parapet and quite unmoved. "Did you hear that dreadful noise?" I enquired, "Yes, sir," he said "He always does it on moonlight nights, it's yon Imam saying his prayers."

## MORE TRENCH LIFE

*training* officers after war breaks out. I don't think even first-class instructors can do it. It takes years of experience and training to teach.

One feels at times rather bitter against the man who slacked in peace time, but I suppose it was not his fault, but the fault of the system and the fault of the parents in many cases whose invariable answer to the question, "How is your son getting on?" was, "Well, thank you, he is earning £— a year."

You CAN'T (in red letters) make an army after war starts.

You *can* make a man who will go over the parapet and take, or not take, a trench (once or twice), but he won't hang on when the counter attack comes.

It makes me think a long war is inevitable, we can't break through modern positions, even with plenty of high explosive now that our old regular army is done in, but we *can* hold a modern position, and in time wear the devils down. I'm not a pessimist and I don't feel downhearted. We shall win, there's no doubt about that, but it will be a long job I fear, and some of the slackers will be planted with much lack of ceremony in a foreign country before the job is through. That's comforting anyhow!

I have just been round the fire trenches. There is nothing doing except the usual sniping and bomb throwing. I used my new periscope; I used it all along and never got sniped. I don't think they spot it, the top is so small.

It looks more and more like a winter campaign here, in fact I see no alternative now unless tons of troops are sent here at once.



## LETTERS FROM HELLES

Whether our Division will be left here or not I don't know.

We have borne the brunt now for 4 months with the exception of the landing and the last fighting up North. We are a very patchwork crowd now with very few officers and we have been 12 months in a hot climate, which is inclined to take the kick out of troops, and that without any rest or leave.

If it turns into a winter campaign, the sensible thing would be to take us out for further training and reorganization.

We should be as good as new in 2 or 3 months and a valuable fighting force, whereas now as a Division we are not much use.

3/9/15.

My writing will be bad as my right thumb is painful, altho' better and on the heal, but I am waiting patiently to have it dressed when it will be more easy, as at present it is badly stuck to the dressings.

Otherwise I am very fit and it is a good thing, as I and E. J. Burrows are the only officers properly on our feet for the moment. Ernest Fletcher is not well and is resting in his valise. Cronshaw is laid up, and I am afraid will have to go to hospital. F. James is seedy, Capt. Allan is seedy, both our new subs are seedy and Lund went to hospital yesterday! A nice crowd. There are only 3 now unlisted of the old originals, Self, E. Fletcher, and Cronshaw, and I am very afraid there will only be 2 by this evening.

## MORE TRENCH LIFE

### 5TH BATTALION THE MANCHESTER REGIMENT CASUALTIES TO AUGUST 10TH, 1915

	Original Numbers	Killed	Wounded	Total Killed and Wounded	Sick	Total Casualties
<i>Officers.</i>						
Original Bat.	35	7	18	25	6	31
1st Draft ..	1	—	1	1	—	1
2nd Draft ..	5	4	1	5	—	5
Kitcheners ..	7	5	1	6	—	6
<b>Totals ..</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>43</b>
<i>Other Ranks.</i>						
Original Bat.	797	148	403	551	105	656
1st Draft ..	100	23	32	55	6	61
2nd Draft ..	20	4	2	6	1	7
<b>Totals ..</b>	<b>917</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>612</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>724</b>
<b>Add Officers</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Totals ..</b>	<b>965</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>458</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>767</b>

#### Notes.

There are no missing and no prisoners. All were killed. Strength on August 10th, 1915:—9 Officers, 315 other Ranks.

Officers surviving and not included in these figures:—  
Lt.-Col. H. C. Darlington, Major E. Fletcher,  
Major A. E. Cronshaw, Lt. Lund, Cap. J. H. Allen (9th Lincs.).

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

The 3 seniors, too, in fact the old birds, the fathers of many who know when to change wet clothes, not to mention the ancient art of trench crouching. However, I really am fit bar sores. I have just had my thumb dressed and feel very comfortable, but it is rather septic and the dressing was badly stuck.

I may get to Alexandria yet! Altho' I don't think. This is mere wit on my part, so don't take it seriously. Septic sores are the fashion amongst the 29th and 42nd Divisions.

We came back for a rest yesterday and are now on Gully Beach.

We all, men and officers, live on ledges cut in the cliff like rows of guillemots and puffins. We have a dining-room, very luxurious, with a tarpaulin to keep the sun off and a rough table and forms: immediately outside is the sand and next to that the sea. I have to sleep in a sort of sarcophagus cut in the cliff and when I step, or roll, as the case may be, out of bed, I'm in the dining-room. Incidentally if I roll over once before I wake up, I am in the sea.

It is all very dusty and pretty hot and the men's rest consists of endless and apparently useless fatigue parties.

The 5th and 6th Battn. H.Q.s live together and that is very nice. I think I told you we were living together up on Fusilier Bluff and in Y Ravine.

I have been round to-day looking at the new draft —. They may fight all right. The first two drafts went over the parapet on Aug. 6th like men, but it is not going over the parapet that wants training, it's knowing what to do and how to stick on to a cap-

## MORE TRENCH LIFE

tured trench when you get there. I long for 2 months at them at Cairo or elsewhere.

Our old crowd were so magnificent both physically and as soldiers. One realizes it now. I am breaking the eleventh commandment (war edition), "Thou shalt not grouse" badly, so will stop.

The 2nd lb. of fresh butter arrived safely and we thoroughly enjoyed it. It is the best thing we have.

Personally I look forward to butter and cigars more than anything, greedy pig! I can tell you we don't throw any butter away until it is so strong that you can't taste the jam through it.

Willie Douglas has been seedy and away on a Hospital ship. I hear he is back again.

6/9/15.

I am very well and my hands are better. I felt rather seedy for a day or two after my 2nd inoculation against cholera, altho' the Medical authorities say there is no effect.

We have conclusively proved they are wrong, as such a lot of us felt seedy after it. Cunningham thinks it made my hands worse, too. I have been punctured 10 times during the war, 2 enteric, 3 smallpox, 3 bronchitis and 2 cholera! What a war.

We are still doing the puffin act and enjoying it, but shall soon go back to strafe with the Turk. I am very short of officers now and W. Douglas has this morning sent me 131 4th East Lincs. to fill up my gaps. I don't know how long they are here for, but I should imagine it is permanent. Anyhow I have split them up into 16 parts, one for each platoon.

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

I have no officers and very few sergeants left. Ernest Fletcher and I are the only ones now left of the old lot as Cronshaw and Lund are both in hospital and Ernest is pretty seedy and mostly in his valise.

The Battn. is now as follows :—

- |                                                                 |                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Lt.-Col. H. C. Darlington                                    | } Battn. Staff. |
| 2. Major E. Fletcher                                            |                 |
| Company Officers.                                               |                 |
| 3. Capt. J. H. Allen, 9th Lincolns, Commanding<br>A and B Coys. |                 |
| 4. 2nd Lt. E. J. Burrows. C Coy.                                |                 |
| 5. Capt. F. James. D Coy.                                       |                 |
| 6. Lieut. G. E. Allen.                                          |                 |
| 7. 2nd Lt. Dickey.                                              |                 |
| 8. 2nd Lt. Batten.                                              |                 |
| Staff.                                                          |                 |
| 9. Capt. Cunningham, R.A.M.C.                                   |                 |
| 10. Lt. Taylor, Q.M.                                            |                 |

We still live with the 6th Manchesters, it makes a lot of difference, altho' they are down to 2 now in their Battn. H.Q., Lt.-Col. C. Pilkington and Capt. Holberton (Adjutant).

We gave a party last night and had a tophole dinner.

Hors d'œuvres. Sardines. (Yours.)  
Soups. (Meat, vegetable.)  
Roast Beef (ribs). Very juicy.  
Roast potatoes.  
Beans.  
Plum Duff.

## MORE TRENCH LIFE

Fruit salad. }  
Cream, whipped. } Yours. A1.  
Coffee, real.  
Cigars. (John Hirst's.)

We went on afterwards to a sing-song arranged by the 5th and 6th Battalions. It was quite good and was held on a sort of terrace cut in the cliff, assisted by one candle lamp. We had no piano, but there was a distinct accompaniment, the guns up at Anzac were firing heavily all the time in the far distance, and our own *Scorpion* was flinging shells over our heads at intervals.

The hit of the evening was parts of *La Tosca* and *Faust* sung by a French soldier who is chef to Gen. Douglas and cooks very well (I dined there three nights ago), and who at home is an opera singer, and a very good one, too. He finished up by singing the *Marsellaise* awfully well ; it was perfectly magnificent and poor old "God save the King" sounded pathetic immediately after it, so far as tune and words went. Douglas was very affable the night Pilkington and I dined there.

Postlethwaite lives next door to us and I dined with him the night before last at his Field Ambulance. They have a tent as a Mess pitched on a platform cut out of the cliff. They are very lucky and have beds and chairs and have not to move house every 3 days !

I hear we go back to the trenches on Thursday (to-day is Monday) only a week's rest again. We never get as much rest as the other Brigades.

The officers at the Bombing School fish a lot just off here.



## LETTERS FROM HELLES

They go out in a boat and drop 3 or 4 bombs in the water which kill the fish. The fish don't float, and they then dive for them. They made an error yesterday and laid out 3 men, one of my men being wounded.

8/9/15.

We are still on the shore, but go back again to a new part of the line on the 10th.

The 5th will be in Brigade reserve, so we shall have an easy time for the first 4 days. It is a good thing, too, as Ernest Fletcher is still seedy, and if he does not improve soon I shall sack him off on to a Hospital ship for a rest.

I have no news of Sanders or Cronshaw. I am very well and have only one sore left now, but it is quite clean again and will heal in time. I have applied for Bob How as an officer, but whether I shall get him, or even where he is, is another matter.

I was very interested in the bags of the 12th and 14th Aug., and so was Postlethwaite. We licked our lips over them and tried to remember whether the birds were killed in the usual butts and came to the conclusion they were, generally.

The weather is much cooler. In fact it was very cold last night and so cold this morning that I did not bathe altho' I did yesterday. I can't get any information about young Armitage<sup>1</sup> and his Division are elsewhere, so I cannot go and see any of the Hampshires, but I have written to their C.O. to ask him to write to Mrs. Armitage with any details.

<sup>1</sup> Killed at Suvla.

## MORE TRENCH LIFE

I have been trying to do what I can for these boys attached to me. I have had them all washed and shaved, and their hair cut and their kit fitted and tried to teach them to know what a clean rifle is, but I really want 2 months to make them even look like soldiers. I call it damned impertinence to try and quell the Turk with the riff raff we have got here just now.

I only hope we are not trying to quell the Hun with the same muck. When I see samples of soldiers and adjutants and officers, it makes me quite glad there is a war as God knows what the "Englishman" would have degenerated into in another 10 years.

Even the vaunted K.'s army have got to be taught to bite firmly and old man Turk charges very heavily for his first-class lessons. The Yeoboyes are an exception. They did magnificently up North, I am told.

Gen. Douglas told me that our losses on Aug. 6 and 7 were not in vain.

We not only succeeded in keeping the best troops from Adrianople here, but actually fetched part of the reserves down to us and so made the landing up North a success. He also told me that when K.'s army were sticky and did not get the ridge when they could have, Gen. de Lisle said, "I wish to God I had the 29th and 42nd Divisions here. I'd have been on that ridge now." That says a good deal, as our Brigade is admitted to be the fighting edge of the 42nd.

I am very glad my old dog Simon did so well on the moors, and I do wish I had been there. I'd sooner shoot grouse than strafe Turks. However,

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

there's always the off chance that someone may some day shake the dust out of their eyes and realize that the Division is not much use as at present constituted. We *may* get sent home to reorganize and return. It's the only sensible course; but that's against it, of course. On the other hand they may prefer to keep their fresh troops out of it and let the weary Willies hold on here until there are none left.

9/9/15.

Yesterday afternoon when I was resting I saw a naval launch quite close to the shore and some handkerchiefs waving. I did not take much notice until one of the servants rushed in and said, "There's women in that boat, Colonel." I went out and sure enough there was a party of Australian nurses being shown round the shore to see how the wild soldier lives and sleeps. I got my glasses to see the unusual sight and much to all our Tommies' annoyance, a young nut of a staff officer with much ostentation put his arm round one of the nurses' waists, struck an attitude and waved his hand at us. We all shook our fists at him, which caused great amusement on the launch. It's curious when you think of it, they were the first women I have set eyes on since May 6th—over 4 months.

Ernest is no better. I think I shall be sole survivor of the old lot in the next two days. I am not quite fit myself to-day, but it is nothing. I am being careful, I can't afford to get sick at the present moment. It's not good enough being C.O., Second in Command,

## MORE TRENCH LIFE

Adjutant, M.G. Officer, Transport Officer and helping short-handed and not over-well Company officers, but it's got to be done and it's not so difficult as it sounds. The attached troops are rather a trouble at this juncture, I admit, but even they are looking up and seem more like semi-soldiers and less like Dago violinists. However, so long as I keep fit I don't care a damn. I manage to do that somehow altho' we all want a rest and a change of air and diet and thought, especially thought. Even the fittest are inclined to be rather listless.

However, there's nothing for you to worry about, I'm not.

11 9/15.

I am quite all right again, altho' I felt rather seedy the day before yesterday. I took great precautions in food as I cannot afford to run any risks of going sick at present.

Ernest Fletcher went to hospital yesterday, so I am now sole survivor of the original lot and there is only Capt. Allen<sup>1</sup> besides out of the first 48 officers. It is pretty extraordinary that I should have seen the whole lot out, one way or another.

Much to my surprise Clement Fletcher and 3 subs walked in yesterday. I had no idea that anyone was coming at all and only wish I had Lindesay Fisher<sup>2</sup> and Jack Cotham as well. Clement Fletcher<sup>3</sup> is acting adjutant.

<sup>1</sup> Capt. J. H. Allen, 9th Lincolns.

<sup>2</sup> Major Lindesay Fisher, my brother-in-law, Capt. J. Walmesley-Cotham, and Capt. C. Fletcher, all of the 25th Manchester Regt.

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

I hear, but don't know for certain that Sanders has gone to England, but I can hardly believe it.

We moved up the big Ravine yesterday and are now behind the firing line in reserve for 4 days. We then go up to the fire trenches.

A lot of men are going to hospital each day, but not for any one reason. The old hands are rather played out and the new ones unacclimatized, and they are all in just the condition to get crocked in their weak spots, whatever they happen to be.

I keep very fit bar sores and a bit of rheumatics in the neck now and then. I am taking a lot of care. It certainly pays, altho' I must confess I sometimes rather envy the slight crock going away for a rest on a Hospital ship. I am very relieved to have some new officers and they seem quite good too. We are only 11 all told, as 3 subalterns were snatched on arrival and sent to another battalion. I'm sorry for them. A subaltern<sup>1</sup> in the 9th Manch. has got the V.C. We don't grudge it him, but we do think Ken Burrows deserves one even more, as his performance stands out when everyone was gallant. More of your parcels turned up to-day, one of them had butter in. It was not declared on the outside but the label was soaked with butter, so I had the parcel opened at once. It is quite good altho' just turned, but we don't mind a trifle like that. I got another 2,000 cigs. and a box of cigars from Mr. Hirst. They really are priceless here. It's getting quite cold at nights now and I am sleeping in my valise even up here, for the first time since we landed. I am afraid we shall have rain very

<sup>1</sup> Lieut. Forshaw, V.C.

## MORE TRENCH LIFE

soon and of course there are no preparations to meet it! We are beauties to wage war. All the materials seem to be used for building winter palaces for red tabs: even the cement intended for a breakwater.

I think Willie Douglas<sup>1</sup> and I are about the only seniors in the whole Peninsular who have come through this show unstellenbosched, unsick, un-gone-off-your-head and I am afraid unsung! Next war I shall join the Navy. It is pretty safe and you don't even have to do your own advertising.

I am going to rest now and read the "Lunatic at large."

12/9/15.

I am very fit again and on full diet. Look in the films developed by Kodak and see if there is one with only a small photo in the middle of the film. It was taken through a loophole at the southern bomb barrier and ought to show the inside of the Turk trench with dead Turk complete.<sup>2</sup> They have turned out awfully well, but I want some new films. No. 2 Brownie.

15/9/15.

I am waiting for breakfast, I was up early this morning as the "ploughing rain" started last night, and it is difficult to keep dry in bed without proper shelter. This show is the limit, everything is tackled too late.

<sup>1</sup> Major-General Sir William Douglas, commanding 42nd Division.

<sup>2</sup> It came out very well. The bombers having killed the Turk asked me to take his photograph.

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

There are tremendous windy pow-wows going on about shelters for the troops, but no material to make them with, comforts for the troops and meantime—it rains. On paper we shall be more or less comfortable, actually, goodness only knows when.

Manâna or little by little should be the motto of G.H.Q.

Anyhow it is a certainty for a winter campaign now, altho' it is difficult to understand. If it is as important a show as people make out, why on earth they don't race out every man from home, half the Italians and any other Dagos we can beg, borrow or steal as Allies—fancy England leaning on Allies—and finish the Turk off, irrespective of losses.

We moved up into the firing line yesterday, and it is an extraordinary place, quite a new one to me. Very crooked and tricky, very near the Turk (about 40 yards away) and bullets seem to come over from all sides, partly our own and partly the Turk.

As soon as Clement Fletcher and I arrived at Bttn. H.Q. the Gunners, God bless them, put 2 shells right into us; only one man was hit, but they nearly blew our Mess shelter up. I telephoned back and objected, and in due course a subaltern, one of K.'s worst, arrived to investigate and try and pretend it wasn't he. He talked in an airy way of a premature, the usual hot air. He said the first shell was his and was a premature, but that his last shot he had seen burst on J11, so it couldn't be his. I offered to bet him a sovereign both his last rounds were fired on the same laying, but he wouldn't take it. I also told him I'd had 29 casualties from our own guns and, if he didn't

## MORE TRENCH LIFE

mind, I didn't want to get it above 30. He now looks upon me with suspicion, altho' I stood him a whiskey.<sup>1</sup>

It is 11.30 a.m. now and beautifully sunny, so one can dry things. I have just been round the fire trenches and all is quiet.

Young Gerald Allen had spotted a Turkish cook-house up the big nullah and stopped cooking operations with a periscopic rifle, also I could hear dogs barking in the Turk trenches, otherwise all quiet. I took Clement Fletcher his first round of the fire trenches last night. The Turk was strafing with rifle grenades, but he did not seem to mind. The Turk also chucked in some bombs from a trench mortar that went off with a huge roar and did the usual amount of damage, nil.

I got part of the bomb this morning and it is home-made, apparently out of a piece of the old man's trousers and fastened on with a nail, the shell or bomb is a fired brass shell-case filled with old nails and rubbish and high explosive. I am glad he has to invent his engines of destruction, altho' we make our own bombs out of old jam tins, but they are quite efficient.

I see the pioneers are busy putting me a roof on my dugout. Good work, as we shall be here for the next 10 days and goodness knows for how many other 10 days during the winter. One of the photos I am sending back shows one of our naval big shells bursting right on the top of Achi B. and gives you some idea

<sup>1</sup> Later on in the war, one understood the good gunners' difficulties better.



## LETTERS FROM HELLES

of the explosion when you think it was taken at least 3 miles away.

I am very well, but my hands are bad again, and I have 3 places again, more or less painful. As soon as Ernest or Cronshaw comes back, I think I shall apply for 2 days' rest and sea air on a Hospital ship and get rid of them. Gen. Lawrence advises me to and it certainly would be very pleasant to have nothing to do or think about for even 2 days.

I will post now, 6 p.m. The Taube has just been over and one of our seaplanes, like a large hearse, tried to chase it. The Taube had the top berth and we could see him firing down on the seaplane. He got away of course.

17/9/15.

I am very fit again bar my hands, but I am afraid they are not bad enough to get me home!

Poor Frank James was badly hit last night. I told you about the big Turk home-made trench mortars which he only brings up at night.

We had treated them with derision, but yesterday afternoon as a precaution I got our artillery on the job and they strafed them, much to their own satisfaction. However, I fancied the Turks removed them by day and told them so. The strafe failed, and promptly at 9 p.m. the Mortars started again, damaged my support trench and knocked out James.

I got the gunners to open fire and the Turks have not fired since, but I am waiting to see if they start again to-night; especially as they put one just behind my

## MORE TRENCH LIFE

cubby hole the other night. Anyway I can get the guns on if they do, but I can't get James back.

I have had to send C. Fletcher to command D. Co., and am now without an adjutant, a 2nd in command, a M.G. officer and a transport officer and C. Fletcher and Allen are my only 2 captains.

The day before yesterday the Turks exploded a very big mine under the 7th Man. fire trench and blew in about 35 yards of it with considerable casualties. It was just a few yards clear of my left flank, but we had a bit of a time straightening up and were quite relieved that no attack came. The crater was 20 yards across and very deep. The Turk seems to have some more ammunition to-night! I told you that our greeting on arrival here was 2 of our own shells into Battn. H.Q. To-night I have had 2 more put in my fire trench, wounding one man.

It is getting cooler and has rained twice, but I have a ground sheet roof to my dugout, which looks like a dilapidated cart shed. Any Parish Council would not allow you even to keep hens in it, but I regard it as the height of luxury. I should sleep in it sounder if I had more officers.

Gen. Lawrence has gone again, we don't know for how long this time, and Canning is temporarily i/c the Brigade.

We are settling down for a winter campaign and arranging amusements and a band for the men in the Division. I attended a meeting (in the chair Willie Douglas). I am very much in favour of it, as the men love a band and offered my instruments free of charge. Douglas asked me to be President of the

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

Amusements Committee on the spot. I refused this honour. Anyhow I am on the committee by special nomination.

I got your letters up to Sept. 1 and also a parcel with no number. I have all up to 6 so far.

The stocking puttees you sent me are the most comfortable things I have had for a long time. Do send me another pair or two.

21/9/15.

We are still in the firing line ; nothing much doing except bombing, sniping, shelling and mining. The Turk has blown up two mines now. The first I told you about before, the second one was a fiasco, it blew the poor old gent's parapet in and did not touch us ! The edge of the crater is only about 15 yards from my trench and as it is uphill a bit from us, I can't see into it. I expect the old fox may try and turn it into a bomb pit, so I have two bomb teams opposite it and they throw a bomb into the crater every 10 minutes during the night ; the Turks have tried to bomb from there twice, but each time we flooded the place with bombs and he has now given it up. We have got another humorous game up here, which annoys the old man some. We fire rifle grenades direct at his loopholes and blow them in at nights, it gives us great amusement and causes him plenty of fatigue work repairing. The only drawback is it must keep him very fit. He throws stones and clods of clay into one bit of our trench where we are very close and it amuses some of our subs throwing them back, one sub throws

## MORE TRENCH LIFE

about 4 lumps of clay by way of humour and then a bomb, which does not seem cricket. I wanted to test a new loophole plate the other day as against an old one, and I racked my brains as to where I could get a Turk rifle and ammunition from. I suddenly remembered a very obliging sniper opposite the N. Barricade who was a very persistent and accurate shot—I put him up the old plate during the night at a 40 yards' range and in the first hour of dawn he put 27 holes clean through it. Next night I put up a proper loophole with the new plate and let him have a couple of hours at it. He could not even dint it, so I was able to report accordingly. We were all very much obliged to him, but the unwonted spell of free sniping had made him uppish, so we fetched up the trench mortar and chased him out of his cubby hole. That struck us as not being cricket too. Wouldn't he be angry if he knew ?

The Forward Observing Officer (Artillery, called the F.O.O.) here is Garnett, Territorial Artillery, he knows Slaidburn well as he stays with the King-Wilkinsons. Things seem quiet here. I must now go round the fire trenches, which reminds me, I took the last bandage off my hands yesterday, went round the fire trenches last night, knocked the healed place of course and am now in bandages again, with my trouser pocket unavailable.

22nd. 6.30 a.m.

The Turk blew up another mine yesterday evening and again blew in part of his own parapet. Our

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

miners think the Turk is scared about our mines and is trying to blow them up. Poor Frank James died of his wounds. I am very well and am again entirely without anyone to help me as I had to send G. Fletcher to take James' place.

25/9/15.

We are back again on the seashore in the old spot for a week's rest and we are quite glad to get out after our fortnight up, as we had a pretty thick time there.

The Turks blew up 4 mines whilst we were there and twice blew in about 30 yards of our trench where we joined the 6th Man. The casualties were only about 50, however, and very few belonged to us. The last mine was a very big blow up and made a very big crater. However, they never attacked. I went down there about 11 p.m. the night before last to see if I could do anything to help the 6th and had a very exciting half-hour.

The Turks began to throw bombs right over the crater when we were all looking at the digging, etc. operations.

I stayed about half an hour and then as all was quiet, went back to bed. During that time they banged over probably 40 or 50 bombs. Luckily for us they were using too long a fuse. You can see them coming by the fuze and they fizz on the ground long enough to let you lie down. When one dropped near us we lay down and the result was the Turk only managed

## MORE TRENCH LIFE

to kill one R.E. officer and one man.<sup>1</sup> We had great difficulty in locating the bomb pit, but eventually got the trench mortars on to it and strafed it thoroughly.

Why he did not get a big bag of us I don't know: I imagine it was because our slope of the crater<sup>2</sup> was very uneven and if one lay down the pieces flew over one altogether. This is chiefly the reason why I have not had time to write to you the last 2 days. They managed to kill Capt. Cawley, M.P., of the 6th Manchesters, later on after I had gone. He is a great loss to them.

If you have not already thought of it, I think you had better send me out a pair of trench boots, i.e., thick nailed ones with waterproof legs right up to the thigh, also an oilskin cap. One of our missing officers had some sent out with his trench coat. I did not know there were such things, we are so out of the way here, and, not like those in France, we don't hear of these trench inventions. I had your letters up to Sept. 7th to-day and also parcels. The marmalade was broken and had saturated everything else. They are very rough with parcels and hardly any tins arrive that are not knocked all sorts of shapes.

You must remember everything for here is probably thrown out of a big ship down on to the deck of a trawler. However, your parcels always arrive better than anyone else's I see. I am hoping for sausages and butter. Please send lots of sausages. Don't send any more oxo, cocoa, or lemonade, we have a stock

<sup>1</sup> When this man did not get up after the burst, I asked his mate what was wrong. The reply was, "E's all right, sir, 'e 'as firs."

<sup>2</sup> Afterwards known as "Cawley's Crater."

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

now, also we don't need anything cooling now, but rather the other way. The sun is still hot, but we are having cold winds and the nights are very cold indeed. I am very well and my hands are better than they were.

There was a very exciting scrap two days ago between 4 Taubes and one of our fast Monoplanes. Our airman apparently tried to ram one of theirs: the Taubes of course had machine guns on board, so our man, according to custom here, was handicapped by lack of munitions. However, I could not see that any damage was done to either side and the Taubes cleared as hard as they could. They use the M.G.s now on us, as they generally start shooting at something, and our aeroplanes are hardly ever about when they come.

28/9/15.

I am slightly off colour to-day and was also yesterday. No symptoms, but just what the old hands get here, a general feeling of being off colour and slackness.

Postlethwaite, who lives next door, came in to see me this morning and says I am very slightly jaundiced. He suggested a few days on a ship, but I asked him if he would treat me here for a day or two, as it was so slight. He is doing so and I have promised if it gets no better the next day or two that I will go away for a short time. I am quite comfortable here, as I have a tent and can get plenty of milk food and beef tea. The difficulty is that there is no one here. Ernest, Cronshaw and Sanders are all in England. I cannot therefore leave unless it is necessary, but you need not

## MORE TRENCH LIFE

worry. I shall go off if it does not get better soon, but it is so slight I am quite hopeful that I shall be perfectly right again in a few days.

I enclose you some chits for the album. The celebration of the French victory<sup>1</sup> came off all right by our guns, and the old Turk participated willy nilly—at the wrong end of the shells!

It is quite hot again to-day, but personally the colder weather is much pleasanter. The climate of the last few days has been about as perfect as any climate could be. Beautifully clear with a hot sun and a coldish breeze and very cold at nights.

I think the beginning of the end has arrived or rather the beginning of the middle. It looks to me as if the offensive in the W. was the sign that the Germans have reached their furthest E. The diary I enclose was issued by the 8th Army Corps with their orders, presumably to cheer up the soldiers who are perfectly cheerful in any case. I have had another squad of recruits sent to me, so the KRITHIA commando is going strong. They were met at the entrance by Capt. Allen and two barbers with clippers and were first pushed into the sea to be cleaned and then operated on by the barbers.

<sup>1</sup> Extract from letter from Sir Ian Hamilton to the author: "our *feu de joie* or, as our men called it, the 'furious joy' was fired in celebration of the battle of Loos which more than any other single factor lost us The Peninsula. Actually it was rather pathetic that we (of all people) should be pretending (at home dictation) that this bloody defeat was a victory. The preparation for Loos was the argument used by G.H.Q. and G.Q.G. in France over and over again for holding up our supply of ammunition and issue of trench mortars, a couple of dozen of which would have blown the Anzac Turks clean off the top of the Hill."



## LETTERS FROM HELLES

*Later, 6 p.m.*

I am no worse anyhow, so that's all right, and it is very slight. I shall post this to-morrow and let you know how I go on.

*29th.*

I am being treated with Calomel and am much the same, so am doing nothing. If I am not better to-morrow I expect I shall go for a bit of a rest. Do not worry, it is nothing special, but probably just the natural effects of 5 months of this game. They tell me I am very nearly the only officer on the Peninsular who has been right through.

## VIII.—THE WAY HOME

*S.S. Nevasa. 1/10/15.*

I am writing this from a Hospital ship, which I came on to last night. There is nothing much the matter with me except a very slight suspicion of jaundice. I am not even in bed, no temp., and feel a fraud. However, I am not getting better on the Peninsular, so am glad to be here. I was feeling fairly seedy two days ago, and W. Douglas heard and came to see me! He suggested I should have a fortnight's leave and go to Imbros<sup>1</sup>. He said if I got on a Hospital ship that I should never get back again. However, yesterday morning Postlethwaite came to see me, which was good of him, and said I wanted a complete change, and that Imbros was no earthly use. He said I was slightly jaundiced and that if I went away for a week or two, I should stave it off, whereas if I hung on here it was only a matter of time before I would break down. So he ticketed me "Jaundice Base, Alexandria," and sacked me on to this ship. I am now writing on deck 10 a.m. on our way to Mudros. I shall then try and get on a ship for Alexandria, as I want very badly to get back to Gallipoli in a fortnight or at any rate under a month.

<sup>1</sup> Imbros was merely a short cut to the cemetery.

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

The 5th and 6th Man. are combined in my absence as one battalion under Pilkington, so that's all right. They go up to-day into the fire trenches for 14 days and then back for 14 days, so I feel I have a clear month if necessary. The trouble is, once you get away from the Peninsular it is very hard to get back, they shove you on a ship and you may find yourself anywhere, probably England! I don't want to get further than Alexandria because I can get back from there, but I shall probably have to fight like blazes to get off this ship if she happens to be going to Malta or home. I wish I could get back, one must stick to the battalion as there is no one with it and I can't leave it on Pilkington's hands indefinitely.

You can't think what a relief it is after 5 months' eternal strafing to feel that you have no responsibilities and nothing to do. I am in a big ward in the next cot to Rochdale, who is, I hear, for England.

The Dr. has just seen me, says there is nothing really wrong except that I am run down and has told me to do nothing and feed up and that I shall be perfectly fit with 10 days' rest, so that's all right.

I cannot tell you how nice it is to feel I have nothing whatever to do and nothing to think about. It requires 5 months in the trenches to really appreciate it. I had fish for breakfast and slept very badly last night owing to being in a bed and wearing hospital pyjamas, but shall be all right to-night I expect. This is a very comfortable ship and my doctor is very nice, and I should like nothing better than to cruise in her for a fortnight and then rejoin, but am afraid it is impossible.

## THE WAY HOME

3 p.m. We are at Mudros now, so I shall know whether I stay here or go for a sail to Alex. very soon. I don't want to stay here as it is a perfectly beastly place and no change at all.

2nd Oct.

I could not post at Mudros as we have been sent straight on to Malta, so I shall get a sea voyage. I feel fairly all right now and have a very good appetite. I will post at Malta.

2/10/15.

We should arrive in Malta in a couple of days, and when there I shall have to see about getting back to Helles again. I am feeling very much better again, my appetite is A1 and my sores have healed up bar one on my face, which has very nearly gone.

I don't want to stay in Malta longer than necessary as it is sure to be hot. It seems a pity I can't take a trip to England and back, but I can't afford to take any risks of not getting back to the Peninsular in about a fortnight or so.

The Matron on this Hospital ship is a Miss Knaggs, who is a relation of the Huddersfield doctor, also up to the war she was Matron of a Nursing Home at Southport.

To-day is a regular Mediterranean day, hot, damp and foggy.

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

3/10/15.

I am feeling quite fit again, the weather has changed and is quite cool. I have no news, so I talk about myself, as you will probably want to hear all about me.

There is a staff of nurses on board, but they are very hard-worked and one does not see much of them. They seem quite nice.

I have played a game of chess or two with one of the doctors, but not very intellectually, I'm not out for work. I have been beaten once, but should have won if I had not been extremely careless. We get to Malta to-morrow.

4/10/15. *Blue Sisters Hospital, Malta.*

Just a line to catch the mail to say I arrived here this morning. I am feeling quite fit again now and am not in bed or under treatment. I shall try and get back in 3 or 4 days as I don't want to be away long. The doctor here asked me, when I got in, how I was and I told him I was all right and wanted to get back in a couple of days. He asked how long I had been on the Peninsular—I said 5 months. He roared with laughter and I heard him telling another doctor about it afterwards. He said, "There's a colonel man here who has been on the Peninsular 5 months and wants to go back," and then they both roared with laughter. I can see I shall have to see Lord Methuen.

## THE WAY HOME

5/10/15. *Blue Sisters Hospital, Malta.*

I have posted you two letters and sent a cable since writing the previous part of this letter.

I am feeling quite fit again, but have had slight indigestion to-day. I am a little run down, and the doctor says all I want is feeding up and a bit of a rest. I expect to be only here for about a week and then go back to Helles.

They look upon me here as a sort of miracle to have done 5 months at Helles, and I think a bit mad to want to go back. I am told that they don't let you back very easily if you have been long there!

I cabled you not to come here as you would probably miss me altogether. I know you will be glad I am having a rest, and I must say I am glad to get it, especially as there is nothing the matter with me. I am not in bed and am having a tonic.

6/10/15.

I am feeling all right to-day and my indigestion is better again. I was vetted to-day and was finally written down for a fortnight's rest, but I shall try and get back sooner. The doctors got orders this morning to evacuate this hospital, so they informed me I was for England in the next two or 3 days. I refused to go! so after a bit of strafing they suggested booking me for a month's rest. I told them that was all rot, and finally got it down via 3 weeks to a fortnight.

Five months on the Peninsular is considered enough to crock you for life or turn you into a mental case,

## LETTERS FROM HELLES

they can't believe one can thrive there if one is lucky. Taking it all round I have never been fitter in my life than in S. Africa and in Gallipoli.

Lord Methuen was in here to-day, but I did not speak to him. I have no news, and I have not been into the Town as I have been slacking and enjoying the amazing luxury of doing absolutely nothing. I don't find it as easy as usual ! It is a great temptation to say nothing and so get back home, but as long as I am not unfit of course it is out of the question. If I was unfit I should not hesitate. However . . .

Going to Osborne Convalescent Home to-day.

## APPENDIX A

Orders and messages issued by Lt.-Col H. C. Darlington, 15th Battalion The Manchester Regiment, during the third battle of Krithia, June 4th, 1915 :—

- D.1. Brigade—The French<sup>1</sup> artillery observer stationed in this trench has not yet been informed of operations this day AAA He has telephoned his group Commander, Commandant Deslion, who states he has received no orders yet. O.C. 5 Man., 6.45 a.m.
- D.2. Brigade—Will Lieut. Vincent report to me with torpedoes<sup>2</sup> AAA These torpedoes will be wanted by my first line. O.C. 5 Man., 10.26 a.m.
- D.3. Brigade—Lieut. Vincent is not in our sector. O.C. 5 Man., 11.12 a.m.
- D.4. Brigade—Very little Turk barbed wire destroyed by shell fire on our front so far. O.C. 5 Man. R., 11.30 a.m.
- D.5. Brigade—Scout officer reports Turkish M G. in front Turk trench where trench crosses Krithia road. O.C. 5 Man., 11.48 a.m.
- D.6. Brigade—First line occupied first line main Turkish trenches 12.4 p.m. AAA Second line just left. O.C. 5 Man., 12.16 p.m.
- D.7. Brigade—Please send fourth line to occupy our front trench AAA 3rd line has gone forward AAA Our second line and 7th Manchesters have gained second objective a dummy trench. O.C. 5 Man., 12.51 p.m.

<sup>1</sup> The battalion was supported by the French 75's.

<sup>2</sup> For blowing up barbed-wire entanglements.



## APPENDIX A

- D.8. Brigade—R.N.D. and French were counter-attacked on our right and driven back. O.C. 5 Man., 1.0 p.m.
- D.9. Brigade—R.N.D. driven back AAA Our most advanced line is unsupported on their right AAA If advanced line is to be held we shall want reinforcements. O.C. 5 Man., 1.55 p.m.
- D.10. Brigade—There is a gap on my left and Turkish trench first objective is unheld. O.C. 5 Man., 2.25 p.m.
- D.11. Brigade—Ammunition urgently needed. O.C. 5 Man., 2.30 p.m.
- D.12. Brigade—My forward lines are being enfiladed from our right AAA Unable to locate, but think from trenches in front of R.N.D. AAA Can guns help. O.C. 5 Man., 2.45 p.m.
- D.13. Brigade—My advanced line is 300 yards in front of 1st objective AAA Turks 150-200 yards in front of this AAA Turkish trench 1st objective is held by us and 7th Manchesters to the Donga AAA Continuation of first objective trench on my right is in Turkish hands AAA Third wave gone forward AAA Know nothing of fourth wave, was it not ordered to go up Donga AAA R N D back in their original fire trench. O.C. 5 Man., 2.47 p.m.
- D.14. Brigade—My advanced line driven in on to first objective. No reinforcements here. O.C. 5 Man., 3.22 p.m.
- D.15. Brigade—Ammunition must be sent up AAA Two companies should be sent up to make our original firing line secure. O.C. 5 Man., 3.30 p.m.
- D.16. Brigade—Only small portion of my front line has fallen back AAA Remainder still holding on to second objective. O.C. 5 Man., 4.11 p.m.
- D.17. Brigade—Situation on our front unchanged AAA 1 Company 8th L.F. has come into this line in support on our right. O.C. 5 Man., 5.37 p.m.

## APPENDIX A

- D.18. O.C. advanced line (A and B Companies) 1/5th Manchester Regt—Try and hang on till dark and then retire on first objective. If unable to hang on retire now to same place. O.C. 5 Man., 5.42 p.m.
- D.19. O.C. 7th Manchesters—Let me know where your Companies are AAA Can you get Machine Gun up to deal with enfilade fire from right of nullah. O.C. 5 Man.
- D.20. Brigade—Our second objective is reported untenable as Turk are working round right rear AAA I have ordered it to retire at dark if it can hang on, otherwise now AAA My first objective trench is suffering heavily on the right from enfilade fire, being unsupported on its right flank on the right of Mar Tepe donga AAA I don't know where the 7th Manchesters are quite AAA Please explain situation. I want 10 men to occupy the original fire trench in place of a working party of 6th L.F. who are going forward to Turk trench 1st objective. O.C. 5 Man., 6 p.m.
- D.21. Major Fletcher, first objective—Warn line that our advanced line will retire on you at dusk or sooner AAA How then if you can by fire AAA I don't know where B Co. are AAA Woods' right is on Krithia road AAA Turks have got on his right flank O.C. 5 Man., 6.45 p.m.
- D.22. Brigade—Impossible send single man from our front tonight You must arrange parties from rear for tools and ammunition. O.C. 5 Man., 8.30 p.m.

## APPENDIX B

List of Officers of 1/5th Battalion The Manchester Regiment between landing on May 6th, 1915, and October 1st, 1915, when Lt.-Col. H. C. Darlington was invalided from the Gallipoli Peninsula.

### Original Officers.

1. Lt.-Col. H. C. Darlington	-	Hospital ship for rest, but sent home 30/9/15	
2. Major E. Fletcher	-	Hospital	10/9/15
3. Major A. E. Cronshaw	-	Hospital	20/9/15
4. Capt. J. M. Sanders,	-	Wounded	6/8/15
Leinster Regt., Adjutant	-	Hospital, Sick,	- 8/15
5. Capt. H. M. Rogers	-	Killed	May, 1915
6. Capt. F. S. Brown	-	Killed	May, 1915
7. Capt. A. C. Leech	-	Killed	4/6/15
8. Capt. A. L. Bryham	-	Hospital	Aug., 1915
9. Capt. W. T. Woods	-	Hospital	9/8/15
		rejoined Sept.,	Staff Captain
10. Capt. A. W. W. Simpson	-	Hospital	May, 1915
11. Capt. A. Hewlett	-	Wounded	4/6/15
12. Capt. J. S. A. Walker	-	Hospital	June, 1915
13. Lieut. J. Wall	-	Hospital	June, 1915
14. Lieut. P. C. Fletcher	-	Wounded	June, 1915
15. Lieut. B. L. Fletcher	-	Wounded	June, 1915
16. Lieut. A. E. Johnson	-	Wounded	June, 1915
17. Lieut. W. G. Johnson	-	Wounded	June, 1915
18. Lieut. H. N. Johnson	-	Wounded	June, 1915
19. Lieut. C. Ainscough	-	3 times wounded,	
		Killed	Aug., 1915
20. Lieut. F. C. Gordon	-	Wounded	June, 1915
21. Lieut. J. N. Holden	-	Hospital	June, 1915

## APPENDIX B

22. Lieut. A. C. Brook	-	Killed	June, 1915
23. Lieut. Lund	-	Hospital	Aug., 1915
24. Lieut. T. C. Walker	-	Killed	June, 1915
25. Lieut. M. K. Burrows	-	Wounded	June, 1915
26. Lieut. E. J. Burrows	-	Wounded	June, 1915
		Rejoined	Aug., 1915
27. Lieut. F. James	-	Wounded	July, 1915
		Killed	Sept., 1915
28. Lieut. G. S. James	-	Killed	June, 1915
29. Lieut. A. Lock, Q.M.	-	Hospital	Sept., 1915
30. Lieut. S. Taylor, Q.M.	-	Wounded,	July, 1915
		Rejoined	Aug., 1915
31. Capt. Cunningham,	-	Wounded	May, 1915
R.A.M.C.	-	Rejoined	
32. Lieut. A. S. Parker	-	Wounded	June, 1915
(joined at Cairo)			
33. Lieut. F. Verdon	-	Hospital from Cairo.	
(joined at Cairo)			
34. Lieut. A. Slaughter	-	Hospital	June, 1915
35. Lieut. C. P. Brown	-	Wounded	June, 1915
36. Lieut. V. Hewlett	-	England from Cairo.	
37. Lieut. G. E. Allen	-	Wounded	Sept., 1915

### 1st Draft.

38. Lieut. Clayton	-	Wounded	Aug., 1915
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### 2nd Draft.

39. Capt. D. Winterbottom	-	Killed	Aug., 1915
40. Lieut. McGeorge	-	Killed	Aug., 1915
41. Lieut. Dickey	-	Wounded	Aug., 1915
42. Lieut. Porter	-	Killed	Aug., 1915
43. Lieut. Davies	-	Killed	Aug., 1915

### Attached.

44. Capt. J. H. Allen,	-		
9th Lincolns.	-		
45. Lieut. Skipworth	-	Killed	Aug., 1915
11th W. Ridings.	-		

## APPENDIX B

46. Lieut. Messervy	- - -	Wounded	Aug., 1915
11th W. Riding Regt.			
47. Lieut. Box	- - -	Killed	Aug., 1915
9th Lincoln Regt.			
48. Lieut. Cowan	- - -	Killed	Aug., 1915
9th Lincoln Regt.			
49. Lieut. Iveson	- - -	Killed	Aug., 1915
16th D.L.I.		whilst talking to Author.	
50. Lieut. Foster	- - -	Killed	Aug., 1915
16th D.L.I.			

### 3rd Draft.

51. Lieut. Dickey.			
52. Lieut. Batten.	- - -	Hospital	Sept., 1915
53. Capt. C. Fletcher.			

### 4th Draft.

54. Lieut. Scott.			
55. Lieut. Goward.			
56. Lieut. Pearce.			
57. Lieut. J. L. Bryan.			
58. Lieut. Charlesworth.			
59. 2nd Lieut. Blair	- - -	Hospital	Sept. 1915

## APPENDIX C

### 1/5TH MANCHESTER REGIMENT.

Casualties—Gallipoli—to 31st December, 1915:—

#### OFFICERS.

	Killed	Wounded	Sick	Totals out of	
Original Officers	8	18	8	34	34
Drafts ..	4	2	7	13	21
Attached ..	4	2	1	7	13
<b>Totals</b> ..	<b>16</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>68</b>

### CENSUS OF BATTALION (31st Dec., 1915).

	Original Battalion	Serving 31/12/15
Original Battalion	818	152
1st Draft	100	16
2nd Draft	20	2
3rd Draft	118	27
4th Draft	23	6
5th Draft	95	32
6th Draft	5	4
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,179</b>	<b>239</b>

# APPENDIX C

CASUALTIES TO 31ST DEC., 1915.

			<i>Killed</i>	<i>Wounded</i>	<i>Totals</i>
Original Battalion	..		167	427	594
1st Draft	..	..	30	35	65
2nd "	..	..	5	4	9
3rd "	..	..	5	10	15
4th "	..	..	—	—	—
5th "	..	..	1	2	3
6th "	..	..	—	—	—
Totals	..	..	208	478	686







8 ARMY CORPS.

TRENCH-DIAGRAM of CENTRE-SECTOR.

JULY 1915.

SCALE 6 INCHES TO THE MILE (approx.)



